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Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXIII, Issue No. 256

THURSDAY DECEMBER 26, 2013

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OPINION METER

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INSIDE

BUSINESS



Tablets are a hit with kids but that worries some health experts.

» **PAGE 16**

FOCUS



In the wake of Typhoon Haiyan, Christmas is infused with tragedy.

» **PAGE 18**

LIFE & STYLE



Jennifer Lawrence edged out Miley Cyrus as the AP's Entertainer of the Year.

» **PAGE 19**

\$3M federal aid for CNMI public schools OK'd. PAGE 3
Hotel occupancy rate at 81 pct. in November. PAGE 6

Accountability sought on CW fees

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Besides seeking extensions on the transitional Commonwealth-only worker and E2C investor visa programs up to 2019, Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) is also demanding accountability and performance standards on the \$150 CW fee that's supposed to train and get U.S. workers employed, now that remittances from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services have reached millions.

See **ACCOUNTABILITY** on **Page 4**

» **'Has any US worker trained using CW fee gotten hired?'**
» **CNMI Senate yet to act on fee appropriations bill**

Customs hits undeclared cigarettes

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Division of Customs Services director Joe Mafnas said dozens of "undeclared" cigarette cartons were recently intercepted, including those from an airline employee.

"That was a big hit," Mafnas told *Saipan Tribune*, referring to a Customs employee's decision to search

an airline employee's luggage after he declared only two cartons of legal cigarettes.

It turned out the airline employee brought in 23 additional cartons of

cigarettes but did not declare them. "You are allowed to bring in three cartons of legal cigarettes into the CNMI without paying any tax. Beyond that, you have to pay the tax.

See **CUSTOMS** on **Page 4**

» **Airline employee found with 23 cartons of cigarettes**

Hospital lab undergoes CMS resurvey

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

A team from the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services was once again on island last Thursday, this time to resurvey the public hospital's laboratory unit.

Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. interim CEO Esther Muña confirmed this with the *Saipan Tribune* and she expressed optimism that the final results will be positive.

It will be recalled that CMS notified the hospital a year ago that the CHC lab is at risk of having its CLIA certification revoked. CLIA stands for clinical laboratory improvement amendments, which is a federal regulatory standard that applies to all clinical lab testing performed

See **HOSPITAL** on **Page 4**



Pope Francis' Christmas wish: hope for a better world

VATICAN CITY (AP)—Pope Francis on Christmas Day is wishing for a better world, with peace for the land of Jesus' birth, for Syria and Africa, as well as for the dignity of migrants and refugees fleeing

misery and conflict.

Francis spoke from the central balcony of St. Peter's Basilica Wednesday to tens of thousands of tourists, pilgrims and Romans in the square below. He said

he was joining in the song of Christmas angels with all those hoping "for a better world," and with those who "care for others, humbly."

See **POPE** on **Page 4**

DOING A NUMBER FOR SANTA!

Commonwealth students perform a Christmas number as part of the many holiday-inspired performances and programs held this week and last week in the run up to Dec. 25, Christmas Day.

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Local

A LOOK AT THE SCHOOLS THAT MERGED

Rota school improving, offering more extracurricular activities

By THOMAS MANGLONA II
CORRESPONDENT

For one Dr. Rita H. Inos Jr./Sr. High School graduate, a lot has changed since he left his school on Rota back in 2012. "During my time it was really hard to get things done because of the lack of support from the school administration," he said.

This RHI alumnus, who asked that his name not be cited, also shared that he is happy to see what the school has come to since the merger between the junior high and high school population two years ago.

"Coming back here and seeing everyone being involved in the community through various and diverse clubs is great. I am happy the school has come to this."

According to RHI principal Sharlene Manglona, Education Commissioner Rita Sablan visited the Rota campus last year and heard several suggestions to open up even more school clubs and organizations.

"The commissioner gave them the opportunity to have a club fair," Manglona said.

The fair, which started last



The Dr. Rita H. Inos Jr./Sr. High School Campus on the southern island of Rota.

year, is held one day at the beginning of the school year where students can sign up for the clubs they want to be a part of.

"The ideas of the clubs that we now have open and available came from the students, which is something new for our school," Manglona added.

One of the clubs featured at the school's club fair this year is the Media Club. Adviser and teacher Daisy Barcinas said, "A lot of the kids are now

interested in music and technology."

Barcinas said that, using Career and Technical Education funding, the club has purchased several broadcasting equipment such as cameras and a green screen. She added that the club will be in charge of the school's public announcements and news coverage.

John Burmeo, a senior, said he has so far worked on Media Club videos that promote

friendship and anti-bullying. "Other than spreading good messages we are also able to show the skills we have in making videos," he added.

A club that is going on its second year is the RHI Glee Club. Club adviser Elvira Mesngon shared that the club has already performed at major community and school events.

"It is really great to be a part of the Glee Club," said sophomore Eddie Costona. "We use this as a way to show people our talents and also open up other in front of crowds."

The Ukelele and Guitar Club is something that RHI teacher Antenille Santos said "taps into the talents of the students." The club currently receives assistance from Felix Ribauliman from Hopwood Jr. High School and is also going

on its second year.

"There are so many of the students who are gifted and we are not doing enough to tap into those talents. These kids are amazing," Santos said. She shared that the club has already performed at several community and school events like Rota's annual Christmas parade and show.

RHI's Mock Trial team has also been a driving force both on Rota and Saipan. Coach Donald Manglona said "the program has helped the students a lot in terms of getting them excited about the law."

"A lot of them have considered pursuing law after high school and it has shaped their career path," he added.

Despite being on Rota and lacking some of the resources that students on Saipan enjoy, Manglona said the team has

learned how to find alternative ways on getting the work done, such as having video teleconferences with lawyers on Saipan and using the Internet to their advantage.

The school's Student Council, National Honor Society, JROTC, and sports teams have also had their share of successes throughout the past few years and continue to show promise.

Another program that continues to improve is the Special Education Department. Dorilyn Barcinas, head of the RHI SPED, said the program oversees 24 students in both junior high and high school and majority of them are in "inclusion"—which means the students are mixed with the general education classes and do regular school work, with some modifications and accommodations.

"That is an accomplishment," said Barcinas, who has worked in the SPED department for six years now.

School principal Sharlene Manglona told the *Saipan Tribune* that the school is currently short three teachers in the areas of math and science. "It [the students' performance on tests] really depends on what year we are in and what subjects are taught," Manglona said.

With a diverse list of extracurricular activities now made available, Manglona sees the students "improve and improve each year" on standardized tests and their overall academic ranking as a school in the CNMI.

NEWBORN HEARING SCREENING PROGRAM



Babies learn from the time they are born. One of the ways they learn is through hearing. When a baby is born with hearing loss, many sounds and voices are not heard, and the child's speech and language development can be delayed. CHCC implemented newborn hearing as a standard of care and all babies get their hearing screened shortly after birth.

**Ask if your baby passed the test.
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Repeat offender gets maximum one-year sentence for assault

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Repeat offender Ian Francis M. Dela Cruz has been slapped with a full maximum sentence of one year in prison without the possibility of parole for pushing a man inside a restaurant, causing its glass window to shatter.

At a hearing on Tuesday, Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho ordered the 30-year-old Dela Cruz to serve the one-year prison term without weekend release or any other similar program, for assault and battery. Dela Cruz was given credit for time served.

Camacho said the defendant, a repeat offender, has cases dating back to 2002 for theft, 2003 for theft, 2004 for assault and battery, two cases in 2005 for theft, and burglary in 2011.

Court records showed that Dela Cruz was one of then three male teenagers who were charged and convicted in the

1998 killing of a 13-year-old boy in Dandan.

In this latest case, the Office of the Attorney General charged him with aggravated assault and battery, assault with a dangerous weapon, assault and battery, assault, and disturbing the peace.

Dela Cruz pleaded guilty to assault and battery as part of a plea deal. The remaining charges were dropped. He was represented by assistant public defender Eden Schwartz.

The case arose from an incident on May 5, 2013, when Dela Cruz pushed Jacky Kadiashat into a glass wall, causing the latter to fall through the glass and sustain injuries. Police said that, according to a doctor at the Commonwealth Health Center, the victim sustained a seven-centimeter-long laceration that required 10 stitches.

Police detective Therese S. Kintoki stated in her report that two police officers responded to a disturbance at the Fresh Sashimi House Restaurant located along Brigida St. in Cha-

lan Kanoa on May 5, 2013.

Upon arriving at the scene, the officers found the victim with a laceration on his right inner thigh. Medics were called and he was brought to CHC.

The officers later found Dela Cruz from one of the MGM Garment doors and arrested him. The officers detected a strong odor of alcohol in the defendant's breath.

The victim told police that he was at the Fresh Sashimi House Restaurant when Dela Cruz and his girlfriend arrived.

The victim said at the time he was with the mother of Dela Cruz's girlfriend.

The victim told police that while he was standing on the eastern part of the building, waiting for the owner of the restaurant to give him some fresh fish, Dela Cruz walked up to him and pushed him hard.

The victim fell back, breaking the glass window. When the victim asked Dela Cruz why he pushed him, the defendant threatened him with a knife and a rock he was holding.



Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation

Printing is funded by the Cooperative Agreement for the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Tracking, Surveillance and Integration.



\$3M additional federal aid for CNMI public schools OK'd

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) has disclosed that Commonwealth public schools would soon receive new funds from the federal government to the tune of \$3 million.

Sablan confirmed that the U.S. Department of Education has initially approved the award of \$3 million in additional funding for the Public School System starting this fiscal year.

Commonwealth public schools will be represented at the "final" meeting with USDOE by Education Commissioner Dr. Rita A. Sablan, federal programs officer Tim Thornburgh, and Sablan himself. The meeting is slated in mid-January in the nation's capital.

"This \$3 million new money for PSS took us about two years of work. Next month, the commissioner and some staff will go to DC to meet and sign out with some finality on this new funding for our schools," Delegate Sablan told *Saipan Tribune*.

Sablan said that PSS—compared to other agencies—has a proven track record in using federal dollars for educational needs in the Commonwealth.

Drunk woman breaks window of aunt's house, struggles with cop

A drunk woman allegedly damaged the sliding window of her aunt's house in Kagman III and kicked things inside a police vehicle on Sunday night.

The suspect, Christina D. Sakaziro, 47, also allegedly threatened to have his former husband, a police officer, arrest and fire a responding police officer.

Sakaziro was arrested for criminal mischief and disturbing the peace. Her bail was set at \$500 cash.

Police detective Flora Danica B. Aguon stated in her report that police officer Gigo Tomokane responded to Kagman III on Sunday at 10:33pm after receiving a disturbance call.

Tomokane met with the alleged victim, who was on a wheelchair and showed him the damaged sliding window.

The alleged victim then escorted the officer to a room located in the back of the house, where Sakaziro was using a telephone and had a bottle of liquor next to her.

Sakaziro allegedly shouted at the officer that she broke the window because she accidentally locked herself out of her room.

The alleged victim said her niece, Sakaziro, is a drunkard and would sometimes beat her.

Sakaziro told Tomokane to call her former husband, a po-

lice officer, to take her home in Kobleville. Sakaziro then started shouting profanities, prompting the officer to warn her that she would be arrested if she does not calm down.

The defendant instead shouted profanities at the officer and told him that she will have her former husband, a police officer, arrest and terminate him from his job.

Sakaziro then left the area on foot, carrying a little girl. A witness told the officer that the girl, who was crying, is not the defendant's daughter.

The officer asked Sakaziro to put the girl down, but she refused. The officer then placed Sakaziro under arrest. Sakaziro, however, struggled with the officer. While the officer was transporting Sakaziro in a police vehicle to the Department of Corrections, she unbuckled her seatbelt and attempted to open the doors to get out.

Tomokane stopped the vehicle and called for extra police unit as Sakaziro continued to shout and kick things inside the vehicle. Tomokane sprayed pepper mace on Sakaziro to subdue her but she allegedly continued shouting and refusing to put her seatbelt on. Two other officers arrived and assisted Tomokane in transporting the defendant to DOC. *(Ferdie de la Torre)*

upcoming meeting with USDOE next month.

PSS receives assistance from various federal agencies amounting to \$28 million to \$29 million each fiscal year.

Saipan Tribune learned that PSS, in partnership with the Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning, submitted a grant application to the USDOE in September this year that, if approved, will give public schools over \$3 million in new funding.

The new federal funding opportunity is designed to help school districts implement the common core standards.

PSS began enforcing common core standards for English, language arts, and mathematics in school year 2011. This aligned PSS with 48 other states in the U.S. mainland and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Once it gets the new funding, PSS will use it to improve the implementation of common core standards next school year, 2014-2015. The \$3 million is a three-year grant specifically designed for in-depth knowledge and research on common core standards.

The common core state standards initiative is a state-led effort coordinated by the

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers. These common core state standards define the knowledge and skills students should have within their K-12 education careers so that they will graduate high school

able to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing academic college courses, and in workforce training programs. The standards are aligned with college and work expectations; are clear, understandable and consistent; include rigorous content and application of

knowledge through high-order skills; build upon strengths and lessons of current state standards; are informed by other top performing countries, so that all students are prepared to succeed in the global economy and society; and are evidence-based.

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Saipan immigration document fraud case overturned

By JENNIFER SINCO KELLEHER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

HONOLULU (AP)—A federal appeals court overturned a Chinese national's conviction that he committed immigration document fraud by possessing driver's licenses he illegally obtained in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

A driver's license isn't considered one of the documents authorizing entry into the United States, as outlined by the law that Wei Lin was convicted

of violating, according to the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruling issued Tuesday.

Prosecutors argued that a license is included as an "other" document in the law involving "fraud and misuse of visas, permits and other documents."

The court's opinion states that no federal statute or regulation designates a driver's license as documents authorizing entry, employment, or residence in the United States. "The government merely notes that a driver's license is one of the documents employers may

use to help verify the employment authorization status of prospective employees, as mandated by the Immigration Reform and Control Act," the opinion states.

In reversing the conviction, the 9th Circuit sent the case back to district court.

Lin acknowledged paying a bribe to obtain an authentic license on Saipan. After it was seized during a traffic stop, he lied that he lost it at the beach and received a new one, according to the ruling.

A U.S. District Court judge for the Northern Mariana Islands in 2011 sentenced Lin to six months imprisonment, to run concurrently with credit for time served.

According to a 2011 affidavit by a Homeland Security special agent, Lin told authorities he paid a Bangladesh national \$350 for the first license and agreed to cooperate with an investigation into fraudulent licenses. But when investiga-

tors refused to return his license, he decided not to cooperate.

The ruling upholds Lin's conviction that he lied to a federal agent. According to the ruling, the agent asked him through a translator whether he had any "identification documents" and he said he did not, even though the duplicate license was in his wallet.

Prosecutors couldn't immediately be reached for comment on Saipan, where it was already the Christmas holiday. Lin's attorney also didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

Drunk man who pushed cop gets 8-day prison term

A man accused of pushing a police officer while drunk has entered a guilty plea and was slapped with an eight-day prison term.

Fan Zhang Zhu pleaded guilty to resisting arrest as part of a plea deal.

Superior Court Presiding Judge Robert C. Naraja on Monday sentenced Zhu to six months in prison, all suspended except for eight days. Zhu will no longer serve prison time as he was given credit for time served.

Zhu was placed on probation for six months and required to pay a \$100 fine, \$60 probation fee, and \$25 court assessment fee. He was ordered to perform 25 hours of community service.

The Office of the Attorney General charged Zhu in October with resisting

arrest and assault and battery.

Zhu and counsel, assistant public defender Eden Schwartz, signed the plea deal with the government represented by assistant attorney general Jacinta Kaipat.

Zhu reportedly pushed police officer Steven Castro in the arm and chest on July 17, 2013, on Saipan, and resisted arrest by pulling away his hands as the officer was attempting to handcuff him.

The police report stated that Castro had responded to a complaint at Lucky Seven Poker in Susupe where he then heard a commotion coming from the back of the arcade. Castro traced the noise to a tin house where he saw through an open window to men pushing each other.

Two women entered the house and assured the officer that everything was fine as they were just having a drinking party.

Zhu, who was allegedly drunk and belligerent toward his drinking partners, pushed Castro on the arm and chest while asking who called the police.

Upon being informed that he was being arrested for assaulting a police officer, Zhu pulled his hand away and went back inside the tin house.

Noticing a golf club and a cleaver knife within Zhu's reach, Castro used pepper mace on him.

Zhu then allegedly stood in a fighting stance with both fists clenched, police said. He was subsequently arrested. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)

POPE

From Page 1

Among places ravaged by conflict, Francis singled out Syria, South Sudan, the Central African Republic, Nigeria and Iraq. He also prayed for fruitful peace talks between Israelis and Palestinians.

Pilgrims celebrated Christmas Day Wednesday in the ancient Bethlehem church where tradition holds Jesus was born, as candles illuminated the sacred site and the joyous sound of prayer filled its overflowing halls.

This year's turnout has been the largest in years in Bethlehem and the celebrations have been marked by careful optimism amid ongoing Israeli-Palestinian peace talks. Leaders expressed hope that the coming year would fi-

nally bring the Palestinians an independent state of their own.

The top Roman Catholic cleric in the Holy Land, Latin Patriarch Fouad Twal, led a prayer for some 1,000 worshippers as bells rang and tourists from around the world flocked to the fourth-century Church of the Nativity complex to see the grotto that is Jesus' traditional birthplace.

"The whole world now is looking at Bethlehem, the birthplace of Jesus," Twal said in his annual address. "The Holy Land is where Jesus was born in the grotto and we have to reflect this bright picture of Jesus by representing the morals of Jesus, the message of Jesus — the message of love and reconciliation."

Bethlehem lies 10 kilometers (6 miles) south of Jerusalem. Entry to the city is controlled by Israel, which oc-

cupied the West Bank in 1967.

Following a Palestinian uprising that began in 2000, the numbers of visitors to Bethlehem had plunged, including for Christmas.

But thanks to a period of relative calm, they have been steadily climbing in recent years—and while still below the record levels of the 1990s, got an extra push this year following the resumption of Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

Iskandar Salameh, an 18-year-old Palestinian, said the Christmas spirit was uniting those gathered Wednesday.

"We all feel that Jesus is with us today," he said.

Later, Pope Francis will deliver his first Christmas message as pontiff from the central balcony of St. Peter's Basilica to pilgrims, tourists and Romans gathered in the piazza below.

HOSPITAL

From Page 1

on humans in the United States. The objective of CLIA is to ensure the accuracy, reliability, and timeliness of test results regardless of where the test was performed.

"We did get surveyed [last Thursday] at the lab by CMS CLIA, and we did pretty good," Muña told *Saipan Tribune*.

The lab resurvey is separate from the resurvey on the entire hospital itself, Muña said.

"When CMS was here in September, they had a separate survey for "Hospital Conditions of Participation" and one for Dialysis for ESRD (End Stage Renal Disease) "Facility Conditions of Participation." Division of Laboratory Services under CMS is the division that does the survey to recommend or not recommend CLIA certification," explained Muña.

If CHC loses its CLIA certification, this will affect the entire hospital's re-

certification with CMS, she said.

"When CMS conducts a hospital survey like they did in September, they are looking at all Hospital Conditions of Participation and laboratory services are included in that survey. However, when they are surveying laboratory services, they are looking at how that affects patient care in the hospital as required by CMS," she said.

Muña revealed that last week's CLIA survey on the lab is to review the violations found in 2012 as part of the conditions for maintaining CLIA certification.

Back in 2012, CLIA came close to revoking CHCC's certification. Had the certificate been revoked, that would have resulted in CHC not being allowed to own or operate its laboratory for at least two years.

As the agency responsible for the health and wellness of the people of the CNMI, Muña said it would be detrimental if CHCC cannot operate a laboratory and be able to guarantee that services would be available for the

hospital and for all patients, including those with Medicare and Medicaid as their primary payer.

Muña said the latest CLIA survey would still need to be reviewed by the CMS Office in Region 9. However, she disclosed that the survey showed that they meet most of the conditions of maintaining CLIA certification.

Noting the great strides made at the hospital's lab in the past year, Muña commended the cooperation and collaboration demonstrated by certain individuals and groups.

"We had an opportunity over the past year to improve our services in the laboratory as well as throughout the hospital. This recent survey, with the help of DOI, HHS, USPHS Commission Corps, the laboratory directors, including Dr. Phillip Dauterman, the hospital administrator, Dr. Esther Kanayjorn, and the laboratory staff, we were able to accomplish our goal that the laboratory services, a critical service in the diagnosis and treatment of our patients, will be a reliable and available one," added Muña.

CUSTOMS

From Page 1

We've seen two cases wherein passengers did not declare the cigarettes in their luggage upon inspection of their luggage," Mafnas said.

The airline employee later paid for the 23 cartons' taxes.

Mafnas said another individual lied to a Customs employee that she did not have anything to declare in her luggage, only to be discovered that she had over 50 cartons of cigarettes that were not declared.

"When the customs inspector asked her if she had anything to declare, she said none. But when her luggage was inspected, there's over 50 undeclared

cigarettes," the Customs director said.

Finance Secretary Larrisa Larson and Customs' Mafnas said the division is working with the Legislature in coming up with bills that will plug the "loopholes" in laws and regulations so that Customs can impose "immediate penalty" on arriving passengers for not declaring taxable items, or for "lying" to enforcement officers, among other things.

"Right now, everything has to go to court. It takes time and resources. If Customs can impose penalty right away, wherein the passenger pays the tax for discovered undeclared goods, then the government does not lose out on revenues and we save court or government time and other resources," Mafnas added.

ACCOUNTABILITY

From Page 1

The CNMI Senate, meanwhile, has yet to act on the CNMI House of Representatives' five-month-old bill allocating the CW funds.

Under Rep. Trenton Conner's (Ind-Tinian) House Bill 18-97, 30 percent of the CW funds should be for a technical education program; 50 percent for vocational education program; and 20 percent for the Office of the Governor for other government and private sector vocational education and job training programs.

Sablan wants information on how the Northern Marianas College and Public School System are using the CW money they have gotten—and will get annually—as long as there are foreign workers under the CW program.

The delegate also seeks data whether any U.S. worker who has gotten training funded by the CW fee has gotten a job.

CNMI employers pay \$150 in education funding fee for each foreign worker they petition for a CW status, as required by U.S. Public Law 110-229, the law that placed CNMI immigration under federal control on Oct. 28, 2009.

On Thursday (Friday, CNMI time), the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources approved an omnibus territories bill that not only would extend up to 2019 the CW and E2C programs that are supposed to end after Dec. 31, 2014, but demands accountability on the use of CW fees.

The bill, S. 1237, still has to go through full U.S. Senate and House of Representatives for a vote before heading to President Barack Obama.

The legislation includes a plan for the expenditure of funds.

At the beginning of each fiscal year, and prior to the payment of the supplemental fee into the CNMI Treasury in that fiscal year, the CNMI government must provide to the Labor secretary "a plan for the expenditure of funds, a projection of the effectiveness of these ex-

penditures in the placement of United States workers into jobs, and a report on the changes in employment of United States workers attributable to prior year expenditures."

The Labor secretary is also required to report to U.S. Congress every two years on the effectiveness of meeting the goals set out by the Commonwealth government in its annual plan for the expenditure of funds.

The Congressional Research Service's plain language summary of S. 1237 also says the bill "revises the treatment of supplemental fees imposed for employment of nonimmigrant workers paid into the Treasury of the CNMI government for the purpose of funding ongoing vocational educational curricula and program development by CNMI educational entities."

Days before the U.S. Senate committee's passage of the bill, Sablan said the \$150 fee "is supposed to be used to train U.S. workers."

"But, so far, what happens is the fee gets handed over to the Commonwealth government. The Commonwealth government gives part to PSS and part to NMC. And we have no way, no idea whether it results in moving U.S. workers into existing jobs in our economy," Sablan said.

He said S. 1237 "tightens up" the requirements in how the CW funds are used.

"There has to be a plan. There has to be a target number of U.S. workers who will get jobs. There has to be a report back to Congress every year on whether the system is working. If it's not, then we will change it," he added.

The CNMI is still awaiting U.S. Labor Secretary Thomas Perez's decision on the Commonwealth's request to extend the transition period beyond Dec. 31, 2014.

Without an extension of the CW program, the CNMI loses immediate access to some 10,000 foreign skilled and professional workers, mostly from the Philippines, that the CNMI economy has relied upon for years and decades.

'NMI's cultural resources inadequately accounted for in draft EIS'

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

The CNMI's historic and cultural resources are "inadequately considered and/or accounted for" in a U.S. Navy draft study on a proposed expanded use of the Mariana Islands Training and Testing area, acting CNMI State Historic Preservation Officer Laura T. Ogumoro told the U.S. military.

Additional historical and archaeological survey work should be undertaken to preserve and protect these resources, she added.

Ogumoro was one of the CNMI government officials led by Gov. Eloy S. Inos that

submitted comments to the draft environmental impact statement for the Mariana Islands Training and Testing area.

She said additional and testing activities proposed are acknowledged simply as "extension" of the military's ongoing and planned activities under the Guam-CNMI relocation and range complex projects.

Therefore, according to Ogumoro, the "accumulated effects" of these military activities are "inadequately considered and/or accounted for" in the draft EIS.

"Moreover, the piecemeal and segmented approach to the military's proposed activi-

ties in and near locations registered as National Historical Landmarks as embodied in the DEIS/OIES are inappropriate and must be properly addressed in the final Environmental Impact Statement before any Record of Decision is made," Ogumoro said in a Dec. 12 letter to the Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Pacific out of Hawaii.

She cited, for example, "conservation measures and procedures" identified and described in the 2009 Mariana Islands Range Complex Programmatic Agreement but were not readily available in the draft study.

Ogumoro also said "archaeological resources" should include human remains that are sacred and can be viewed as traditional cultural resources.

She said there needs to be summary of what laws, acts, and regulations are required of federal agencies for the protection and preservation of cultural resources.

Ogumoro also said previous archival research and literature review indicates that at least 19 submerged historic resources exist within Tinian waters but only nine locations are known, "leaving 10 locations yet to be determined."

For Saipan, at least 51 submerged cultural resources exist around the island's waters but only the locations of 36 have been determined.

"That leaves 15 submerged historic resources locations within Saipan waters undetermined," she said.

For Rota, at least 12 submerged cultural resources ex-

ist but only the locations of seven have been identified.

Ogumoro said throughout the document, it is repeatedly stating that the Navy will routinely avoid locations of known obstructions that include submerged historic resources.

"The main concern is the locations of submerged cultural resources that have not been determined which trainings and testing may be conducted," she said.

She urges the implementation of underwater archaeological survey within waters around Tinian, Saipan, and Rota to determine the locations of submerged cultural resources.

"The results of this underwater survey, along with the already known locations of

submerged cultural resources will be very important tools for determining safe areas for training and testing programs," she added.

The governor, meanwhile, said in a separate comment letter dated Dec. 11 that the U.S. Department of Defense's efforts to increase control over property belonging to the CNMI is "in conflict and contrary to Section 802 of the Covenant" that established the Northern Marianas' political relationship with the United States. He said his administration is also "deeply concerned" about the proposed military activities' impact on CNMI marine wildlife, particularly marine mammals "which remain grossly understudied in the region."

Ex-Corrections officer uses 'ice' 3 days before serving his sentence

Jesse Reyes Babauta, a former Corrections officer who was slapped with a prison sentence of four years and three months for his role in a conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine or "ice," used the illegal drug three days before he surrendered to federal authorities to start his prison term.

Defendant tells court at sentencing he was drug-free

three months in prison followed by a three-year term of supervised release.

Babauta was then directed to contact the U.S. Marshal's Office

by telephone thrice a week in order to determine a date for his self-surrender to start his sentence.

At the sentencing, assistant attorney general Ross Naughton recommended that the defendant be sentenced at the low end of the guidelines, which is three years and five months in prison.

Attorney Michael Dotts recommended that his client, Babauta, be sentenced to time served plus the maximum allowable probation, with the condition that Babauta be required to submit to random drug testing and continue to attend counseling.

In the sentencing memorandum, Dotts said Babauta is a drug addict and that even after his arrest, the defendant could not control himself and continued to use drugs.

Dotts said Babauta was placed in counseling, with the help of the Office of Probation, and the counseling has thus far been successful.

"Jesse is no longer using drugs," Dotts at the time stated.

The lawyer said Babauta became addicted to "ice" before June 2010 and he left the Department of Corrections because of that addiction.

Dotts said Babauta tested positive during a random drug testing of DOC employees and that ended his career.

According to the indictment, Babauta conspired with other persons to distribute "ice" from June 2010 until Aug. 22, 2012, in one instance within 1,000 feet of a school.

Babauta has a prior conviction of disturbing the peace in 2007. (Ferdie de la Torre)

U.S. Probation Officer Gregory F. Arriola informed the U.S. District Court for the NMI on Friday that on Dec. 9, 2013, Babauta reported to the U.S. Probation Office upon his instruction for a random drug test.

Arriola said that before submitting to the test, Babauta admitted to using "ice" on Dec. 7, 2013, because he was reportedly stressed out about his upcoming surrender date and the fact that he would be away from his family.

Arriola said he submitted the report for informational purposes only and that no action is requested from the court as Babauta surrendered to begin serving his sentence the following day, Dec. 10.

Arriola said Babauta knew that a special condition of his pre-trial release prohibits him from using or possessing a narcotic drug or other controlled substances.

In December 2012, the U.S. Probation Office also told the court that Babauta admitted to drug use on two separate occasions during his pre-trial release.

On Dec. 5, 2012, Babauta pleaded guilty to conspiracy to distribute "ice." That same day, U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona modified the supervision conditions to include substance abuse treatment, and to change the home detention to a curfew requirement.

On Oct. 18, 2013, Manglona slapped the defendant with a sentence of four years and

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Hotel occupancy rate at 81 pct. in November

The Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands reported 80.84 percent occupancy among 11 member hotels for November 2013, a 6-percent

increase compared to November 2012.

A total of 56,071 of 69,360 available



room nights sold in November 2013, compared to 53,703 of 72,060 of available

room nights sold over the same period last year. Room rates were \$105.90 during the month, compared to \$93.15 last November.

"We're pleased with this year's performance, and we're looking forward to a strong winter season," said HANMI chair Nick Nishikawa. "We

are also pleased with how this year's increase in hotel occupancy tax is being promptly applied to more promotions and destination enhancement projects, as the government promised. Our members have struggled, along with the community, for many years, so it is nice to finally be turning the corner and reaping the benefits of our partnership and commitment."

So far this calendar year, hotel occupancy is at an average 82.69 percent, 10 percent higher than last year. The number is slightly over a healthy industry indicator average of 80 percent occupancy.

The Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands was established in 1985 as a professional forum for the hospitality industry of the NMI. (HANMI)

House committee OKs tax rebate cut

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The House Ways and Means Committee recommended passage of a seven-month-old revenue-generating bill that cuts income tax rebate from 90 percent to 70 percent at the highest level of rebate with proportional reduction at the lower levels.

The panel recommends passage of House Speaker Joseph Deleon Guerrero's (Ind-Saipan) House Bill 18-69 in the form of House Draft 1.

The bill cuts the rebate from the Northern Marianas Territorial Income Tax and appropriates the revenues from Chapter 7 tax to the NMI Retirement Fund's defined benefit plan members.

In its report, the committee said reducing the 90 percent rebate will provide the CNMI with instant revenue for two fiscal years.

The Ways and Means Committee said funds collected under this proposal will directly assist in the payment of the 25 percent deferred retiree pension under the Retirement Fund settlement agreement.

Under the bill, the reduction in the rebate will take effect on Jan. 1, 2014, and be in effect for two years.

If the bill does not become law prior to Jan. 1, 2014, the Act will take effect on Jan. 1, 2015.

The bill has come too late for the proposed Jan. 1, 2014, effective date given that the last House session for 2013 was held last week.

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce, the largest business organization in the CNMI, said it is "adamantly opposed" to the tax rebate cut bill.

It said the term tax rebate "reductions" will increase income tax rates and withholding tax rates for companies and individuals in the CNMI.

JSTA, partners get Garapan ready for Christmas



Eighty-five volunteers from Japan Saipan Travel Association, the Marianas Visitors Authority, and other tourism partners netted approximately 380 lbs of trash during their semi-annual industry cleanup of Garapan on Dec. 21, 2013. Forty students from Saipan Swim Club and Himawari Kenbu-kan Kendo Team in Japan joined the travel industry's cleanup in preparation for an influx of visitors during Japan's Christmas and New Year's holiday.

MVA



The Japan Saipan Travel Association and its tourism partners gave the gift of community service to clean up the main tourist district of Garapan on Saturday, Dec. 21.

The semi-annual cleanup came as part of preparations for visitors expected during Japan's upcoming Christmas and New Year holiday and was also held in conjunction with the annual Islandwide Cleanup spearheaded by the Division of

Environmental Quality.

Beginning at 6:30am, 85 volunteers, including 40 children, collected an estimated 380 lbs of trash along the tourist district roadways and beaches from the Carolinian Affairs Office to Micro Beach. Groups joining JSTA included the Japan Society of the Northern Mariana Islands, Northern Marianas Diving Operators Association, Hotel Association of the Northern

Mariana Islands, Consulate Office of Japan and the Marianas Visitors Authority. The MVA also provided water, and Division of Parks and Recreation arranged for trash pickup. JSTA provided gifts to the participating children, including those from Saipan Swim Club, Himawari Kenbu-kan Kendo team, and Japan Society of the Northern Mariana Islands educational department. (MVA)

Flores backs plan to develop NMI as flower destination

Saipan Awaodori Team to take part in the Mochitsuki Festival

Some 30 Saipan Awaodori Team members will take part in the 2013 Mochitsuki Festival this Saturday at the Paseo de Marianas in Garapan.

The event caps the 2013 Christmas in the Marianas campaign of the Marianas Visitors Authority, which started with the Christmas Tree Decoration last Dec. 7 and the Christmas Caroling Competition and Parade of Floats on Dec. 21.

The Mochitsuki Festival is highlighted by the traditional mochi-pounding ceremony called Mochitsuki. Mochi is a Japanese rice cake made of glutinous rice, pounded into paste, and molded into different shapes.

The Saipan Awaodori Team will kick things off in the 2013 Mochitsuki Festival with their performance at 5:30pm.

It will be followed by a Mochitsuki exhibition at 6pm. A group from Green Meadow School will then perform on stage at 6:30pm, followed by the announcement of the first winner of the Mochitsuki exhibition at 7pm.

At 7:30pm, it will be Uku-lele Jammers' turn to entertain the crowd followed by a performance by Saipan Music and Dance. In between the two performances, winners of the Mochitsuki exhibition will be announced.

The evening's event will conclude with the announcement of the winners of the Christmas Tree Decoration, the Christmas Caroling Competition, and the Christmas Costume and Float Competition.

Games and cultural activities during the 2013 Mochitsuki Festival are yoyo, Kujibiki raffle, ring throw, and slipper toss.

Food and drink vendors for the 2013 Mochitsuki Festival include Java Joe's, Okadaya, Hula Girl, Lyn's BBQ, Furasato Restaurant, and Kinpachi Restaurant.

Sponsors of the event are DFS Galleria, Tan Siu Lin Foundation, Public School System, Moby Dick Restaurant, Power 99FM, KKMP, Magic 100FM, MIS Enterprises, Inc. MVA, KCNM, and Kinpachi Restaurant. *(Mark Rabago)*

The Marianas Visitors Authority's plan to develop the Commonwealth into a flower destination has gotten the full support of Saipan Mayor Donald Flores.

Earlier this month, MVA managing director Perry Tenorio told a House of Representatives panel that the islands' tourism body is looking at a number of destination enhancements and one of the plans is to make the CNMI a flower destination.

While he supports MVA's destination enhancements ideas, Flores said the agency should "put their money where their mouth is" and hopefully provide some funding to the mayor's office so it can successfully execute the plan to turn the CNMI into a flower destination.

"That's the reason I'm fol-

lowing the state of hotel tax. Maybe a portion of that would be allotted to the mayor's office for our island beautification projects," said Flores, whose office has lately been active in planting beautiful and colorful flowers on Saipan's highway medians.

"The public has been very appreciative of what we've done and every time I go somewhere there's always someone ask-

ing me for flowers. We'd like to extend beautification to the villages so tourists visiting the villages can see. We also want to help community members plant flowers and offer them seeds and seedlings for a nominal fee. All they have to do is

bring their pots or vases."

Aside from the flowers in the highway medians, Flores is also looking at planting flowers along the Beach Road Pathway from the MVA intersection in Oleai all the way up to the JP Center Building in Garapan.

He is eyeing to set up from three to four "sunset gardens" along the route. "We can put up all natural and use logs/cut trees as borders. [We can] have parking lots on the side for tourists to stop by so they can enjoy the sunset."

Flores' plans don't stop there as his end goal is for the Saipan Mayor's Office's island beautification effort to stretch from the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan In-

ternational Airport down to the hotels along Beach Road.

He added that his grand plans would've been completed by now if not for the decision by the Department of Public Works' decision to cap the medians with cement some months back.

He said palm trees are currently crowding his flowers on the cutouts left open by Public Works.

"Look at the cutouts that they have palms. Look at the flowers that are there that we planted, they're weak, and they're just not blooming. You know why? Because the palm roots are tight and there is no air for the flowers to breathe. I don't support that. If they put palm, I'm not going to do it [anymore]. Either you put palm [trees] or you put flowers." *(Mark Rabago)*



Flores

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Farmers, ranchers urged to vote in county committee elections

WASHINGTON—USDA Farm Service Agency Administrator Juan M. Garcia announced that the FSA County Committee Elections began Friday, Dec. 20, with the mailing of ballots to eligible voters. The deadline to return the ballots to local FSA offices is Jan. 17, 2014.

Producers have been instructed to destroy the FSA County Committee Election ballots (FSA-669's) mailed on Nov. 4. The new ballots mailed to producers will have the word "corrected" printed on the outside of the mailing, the ballot itself, and the return envelope. Producers must complete and return the corrected FSA-669 to have their vote counted.

Eligible voters who do not receive a ballot in the coming week can obtain one from their local USDA Service Center. The last day for voters to submit corrected ballots in person to local USDA Service Centers is Jan. 17, 2014. Ballots returned by mail must be postmarked no later than Jan. 17. Newly elected committee members and their alternates will take office Feb. 18, 2014.

County committee members are an important component of the operations of FSA and provide a link between the agricultural community and USDA. Farmers and ranchers elected to

county committees help deliver FSA programs at the local level, applying their knowledge and judgment to make decisions on commodity price support programs; conservation programs;

» **Corrected ballots mailed to eligible producers on Dec. 20**

incentive indemnity and disaster programs for some commodities; emergency programs and eligibility. FSA committees op-

erate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws.

To be an eligible voter, farmers and ranchers must participate or cooperate in an FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age, but supervises and conducts the farming operations of an entire farm may also be eligible to vote. Agricultural producers in each county submitted candidate nominations during the nomination period, which ended on Aug. 1.

Close to 7,700 FSA county committee members serve in the 2,124 FSA offices nationwide. Each committee consists of three to 11 members who serve three-year terms. Approximately one-third of county committee seats are up for election each year. More information on county committees, such as the 2013 fact sheet and brochures, can be found on the FSA website at www.fsa.usda.gov/elections or at a local USDA Service Center. *(FSA)*



JROTC cadets present their special dance number.

THOMAS MANGLONA II

Rota's junior-senior high celebrates Christmas

By THOMAS MANGLONA II
CORRESPONDENT

Students, teachers, and parents gathered at the Dr. Rita H. Inos Jr./Sr. High School stage on the eve of Christmas Day, Dec. 24, to join the school in its first annual Christmas pageant, themed "Christmas in the past, present, and future."

"This is our first year to perform and have a Christmas pageant," said vice principal Annette Calvo. "We are going to continue this next school year."

Calvo thanked the students, parents, and teachers for putting together the performances and supporting the school during the holiday season.

According to teacher Daisy Barcinas, who was one of the event coordinators, students submitted the idea for the theme and they "wanted to bring back the past culture and blend it in with the present and offer three different eras to make the event a success and enjoyable."

Students from grades 7 to 12 brought to the school's stage original choreographed performances, with a mix of the traditional Christmas songs like *Baby It's Cold Outside* to modern songs like *Melt the Snow*.

"I feel much merrier and festive compared to before. I am enjoying this very much," said JROTC cadet and junior student Neri Jingco.

The event also featured special performances by the school's JROTC Buck Battalion and the newly installed "RHI Glee Club." Each class also showcased their handcrafted banners relating to the theme of the event.

"I am enjoying it because last year we did not have one like this," said sophomore Meriden Hocog. "There are more performances this year and it is important to celebrate things like this to show how much spirit we have."

This was the first Christmas pageant the school has had since its merger in 2011. Students, after the program, headed home for a two-week Christmas break with smiles on their faces and in high spirits.



RHI's senior class performs a dance number.

THOMAS MANGLONA II



THOMAS MANGLONA II

The RHI Sophomore class performs a dance number.



THOMAS MANGLONA II

Board of Education vice chair Denise Tanya King dances with one of the students during the school's Christmas program.



RHI students pose for a photo during their school's Christmas pageant yesterday.

THOMAS MANGLONA II

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

December 26, 2005

'Tinian casino investor lured by QC'

The Commonwealth's qualifying certificate program is one of the main reasons the new Tinian casino investor decided to come to the CNMI, according to the company's resident agent. Philip Long, a Tinian resident and local agent for Bridge Investment Group, said the company seeking to build a new hotel and casino on Tinian would apply for tax incentives under the CNMI's qualifying certificate program in due time. "We're not at that stage yet [where we can submit an application for a QC]. But most likely, we're going to be applying since it was a major interest among the investors—that the CNMI was offering tax incentives if they would bring so much money out here," Long said.

Moore: Finding lost WWII plane is Christmas gift to pilot's family

Volunteers led by businessman-historian Kenneth Moore recalled how his group found remnants of an American fighter plane that was downed by the Japanese forces during World War II, dedicating the effort as Christmas present to the surviving members of U.S. squadron "Highhatters" and the family of the lost plane's fallen Navy pilot, Lt. Roy Bechtol. Moore, founder of the non-profit group Moore's Marauders, made special mention of Bechtol's nephew, Gregory B. Bechtol, for whom he dedicated the discovery. Japanese forces reportedly gunned down the F6F Grumman Hellcat flown by the fallen Bechtol over Pagan on June 23, 1944. In late November 2005, with Bechtol's remains and remnants of his plane still missing over 61 years after the tragic day, the Marauders made a trip to Pagan as part of its efforts to locate missing American soldiers who fought during the Second World War in the Pacific.

December 26, 2006

Rota arrivals down 51 percent

Rota arrivals continued to suffer last month, posting a 51-percent decline. Statistics from the Marianas Visitors Authority showed that Rota only had 994 visitors last month, a significant plunge from November 2005 arrivals of 2,048. Data showed that tourist arrivals via Guam went down by 64 percent, from 1,309 last year to 466 in November this year. Inter-island arrivals also decreased by 29 percent, from 739 in November 2005 to 528 last month. Rota's visitors are mostly Japanese, followed by Guamanians/U.S. mainlanders, then Filipinos. For fiscal year 2006 ending in November, Rota received 2,044 visitors, which is 46 percent lower than the prior year.

Bill seeks local license for Japanese doctors

Japanese doctors will be able to practice in the Commonwealth if a Senate bill is enacted. The Senate, in a bid to enhance the islands' potential as a retirement destination, has passed by unanimous vote a proposed legislation that would provide for the licensing of foreign doctors from Japan. Authored by Sen. Paul Manglona, Senate Bill 15-43 now goes to the House of Representatives for action.

December 26, 2007

Increased GHI rates now permanent

The NMI Retirement Fund has adopted as permanent the increased premium rates for the government's health insurance program. Implemented on an emergency basis, the regulation was to remain in effect for 120 days only. But with the Fund's latest action, the new contribution rate schedule will now be effective permanently. The rate increases became in effect on Nov. 1, 2007, at the same time Aetna Global Benefits took over the Fund's Group Health and Life Insurance Program.

PSS concedes childcare program's transfer to DCCA

The highly publicized tug-of-war between the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs and the Public School System over the child care program seems to have simmered down, with PSS conceding to Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's will in the matter. This comes soon after Fitial issued an executive order designating DCCA as the new lead agency for the administration of the Federal Child Care and Development Fund program. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has told Fitial that the Administration for Children and Families has already received a copy of the order. "I know there are many concerns that come with this. But we have to give DCCA the opportunity, now that the decision has been made," said Education Commissioner David Borja.

FSM senators hold open discussion with Yapese in Guam

COLONIA, Yap—Last week, on their return trip to Yap after the end of the Second Special Session of Congress, two senators representing the State of Yap to the 18th FSM Congress held a six-hour meeting with members of the Yapese Association of Guam.

Nearly 100 members of the association turned up for the meeting held at the Mangilao Community Center. The Yapese in attendance included officers of the association, business owners, resident workers, students, veterans, and others. Former Yap State governor and now FSM Consul-General in Guam Robert Ruecho was also in attendance.

The meeting was at the invitation of the Yapese Association of Guam wanting to discuss a number of concerns and issues affecting the State of the Yap and the FSM nation. The meeting also allowed the two senators—Joseph J. Urusemal and Isaac V. Figir—to address some congressional efforts towards these concerns.

One of the many concerns discussed revolved around the amended Compact of Free Association between the United States of America and the Federated States of Micronesia and the near ending economic provisions under Title 2 of the amended compact. Of keen interest to the group is what the FSM leadership is doing to better plan and prepare the nation comes 2023 when the annual U.S. grant assistance to the FSM under the amended COFA expires.

The two senators shared that FSM President Manny Mori in 2012 issued an executive order

establishing the 2023 Planning Committee consisting of executive leadership from the four FSM States and the FSM national government. The primary goal of the committee is to make recommendations toward the creation of a comprehensive action plan for the development goals of the nation that would eventually lead the nation out of its economic challenges and toward its goal of self-sustainability. The FSM Congress appropriated a \$150,000 budget for the committee in 2012.

In line with this, the senators shared that Congress also appropriated \$5 million into the FSM Trust Fund during the second session of the 18th Congress as a means to address the fiscal and economic challenge after the expiration of the economic assistance from the United States. More notably, Congress also reduced the national government's annual share of the compact sector grants by half, and distributing it over the four state governments. Yap State will get an additional \$700,000 annually for the remaining term of the compact.

In addition, the senators also informed the group that certain tax laws aimed to reform the FSM tax system and generate more revenue remain pending. It is estimated that Yap will generate an additional \$2 million in annual tax revenue after the tax reform is implemented. However, the FSM Revenue Administration Act of 2012 requires that all four states have to pass value added tax legislation prior to March 31, 2014, before any tax reform can be implemented. Yap

has not passed its VAT legislation due to a conflict in law with the Yap State Constitution.

The senators also talked about a bill before Congress aiming to amend the current FSM telecommunications law to liberalize competition; establish guidelines and standards for enhanced access and affordability of telecommunication services; and create a regulatory authority to regulate telecommunication service providers in the FSM. This bill, if passed before February 2014, will open doors to monetary grants and technical assistance from the World Bank for a fiber optic connectivity project into Chuuk, Kosrae, and Yap.

The senators also emphasized their beliefs in promoting investments—both the investments of businesses into the FSM, and investments in the education of FSM students.

In particular, the senators shared the number of scholarships funded by Congress this year, including a \$1 million appropriation into the FSM National Scholarship, a \$100,000 congressional appropriation into the Yap State Scholarship fund, availability of the FSM SinTax Scholarship for graduate students, the Merit Scholarship, and other recent subsidies to neighboring colleges to offset the debts of FSM students. The senators encouraged the students in attendance to apply to these scholarships by contacting either the State or FSM scholarship offices.

The Yapese Association of Guam also discussed a number of concerns that the two sena-

tors agreed to take up with the appropriate FSM and Yap State leadership.

These include a request to revisit the attempt to change the FSM laws to allow for dual citizenships. The group believes that failure for the law to pass in the past was due to insufficient public education on the proposed amendments, and the high voting percentage mandated by the FSM Constitution. This also initiated the group to inquire about the status of the next FSM constitutional referendum.

Another of these concerns include a plea to the Yap State

leadership to look into establishing a dialysis facility in Yap as a growing number of Yapese are moving to Guam for this medical purpose. Additionally, the group also requested the senators to take up with the Yap State leadership the need to build a Yapese Community Center in Guam for the growing Yapese population.

The meeting concluded with the group sharing a number of social issues caused by the increasing population of Yapese and other FSM citizens residing in Guam, including high prison rates and homelessness. When asked what the government can

do, the senators asked the residing citizens to instead ask what they as residents can do. It's a good Yapese cultural norm, even while in Guam, to be "good fellow villagers when visiting someone else's village, or face the consequences imposed by the villagers," the senators stated.

This meeting marks the first open consultation the senators have had with constituents outside the FSM in their quest to keep the public informed and engaged in government affairs. For more information or questions on the works of Congress, visit www.fsmcongress.fm. (PR)

Sobriety checkpoints on Saturday

The Department of Public Safety's Traffic Section will be conducting sobriety checkpoints on Dec. 28, 2013.

■ 5pm to 6:15pm, along Chalan Monsignor Guerrero, Chalan Kiya by the CUC Waterloo, westbound lane.

■ 8:30pm to 9:45pm, Beach Road Garapan, across from Bank Pacific, southbound lane.

■ 10:30pm to 11:45pm, Beach Road, Chalan Lau Lau adjacent to Dr. Benusto Kaipat's residence, southbound lane.

In between checkpoints, traffic NMC hours of operation during holiday season

Although the Northern Marianas College will be open throughout the holiday season, it will be closed on Christmas Day and New Year's Day, and from 1pm to 5pm on Dec. 24 and Dec. 31, 2013.


Note, too, that some offices may have limited hours of operation from Dec. 26, 2013, through Dec. 31, 2013. Notices have been posted on the entrances of those offices with limited hours during this four-day period.

For daily updates and more information, visit www.marianas.edu. (NMC)

fic officers along with patrol officers will be conducting highway interdiction, saturation patrol, aggressive drivers interdiction,

and speed enforcement.

For more information, contact Sgt. Anthony Macaranas at (670) 483-5818. (DPS)

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INVITATION TO BID ITB NO.: ITB14-DPW/BSC-033	
SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: January 08, 2014 TIME: 10:00 A.M.	
"OFFICE SPACE LEASE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS - BUILDING SAFETY CODE"	
COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.	
THE LESSOR MUST COMPLY WITH CNMI PUBLIC LAW 15-23, ARTICLE 5, SECTION 8652 (A) - (D)	
THE COMMONWEALTH RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND PROPOSALS; IN WHOLE OR IN PART, AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTION IN A BID IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS. ALL BIDS SHALL BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.	
/S/ MARTIN C. SABLAN SECRETARY OF DPW	/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN DIRECTOR, P&S

 PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY CNMI GOVERNMENT 	
INVITATION TO BID ITB NO.: ITB14-COTA/FTA-041	
SUBMISSION DATE: JANUARY 13, 2014 TIME: 10:00 A.M.	
"SUPPLY, DELIVERY, INSTALLATION AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT FOR THE PURCHASE OF FIVE (5) FARE CARD SYSTEM UNITS FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OFFICE TRANSIT AUTHORITY"	
THE SPECIFICATIONS FOR THIS PROJECT WILL BE AVAILABLE ON OR AFTER, DECEMBER 19, 2013 AT COTA, OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL ASSISTANT FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION, 2ND FLOOR, NMI RETIREMENT FUND BUILDING, ISA DRIVE, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN.	
THIS IS A FEDERALLY FUNDED PROJECT; BIDDERS ARE REQUIRED TO COMPLY WITH FTA FEDERAL CONTRACT CLAUSES AS APPLICABLE.	
THE GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL PROPOSALS AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN ANY PROPOSAL IF, IN ITS OPINION TO DO SO, WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE GOVERNMENT. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.	
/S/ THOMAS J. CAMACHO SPECIAL ASSISTANT FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION	/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN DIRECTOR, P&S

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXIII, Issue No. 256Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
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MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

How to guard against credit card hackers

The cyber thieves who broke into the computer systems of giant merchant Target Corp. timed their scam perfectly. Beginning just before the Black Friday shopping extravaganza and continuing through Dec. 15, they stole information from as many as 40 million credit and debit cards at the peak of the holiday selling season. Customer names, card numbers, expiration dates and card security codes were compromised.

Companies and government prosecutors will do what they can, but consumers will have to become more vigilant about watching for the handiwork of tech-savvy crooks. U.S. law protects consumers from most of the financial responsibility for fraudulent transactions, but there's still some risk...and a lot of hassle.

It pays to regularly monitor your credit and debit accounts. Anyone who used plastic to shop at Target stores between Nov. 27 and Dec. 15 should make a special effort to search their records for unauthorized charges. It's common for thieves to test stolen cards by first making small purchases, so watch for those. Immediately report unauthorized charges to the card issuer. If fraud is detected, the accounts involved will have to be closed and replaced.

You can sign up for online alerts or other card-monitoring services that many issuers offer to give customers immediate notice whenever a card is used. It's a good idea to periodically change the PIN associated with cards. Watch out for scammers who pretend to be with a card issuer: Don't give out personal information over the phone or online without confirming who is on the receiving end.

Pain in the neck? You bet.

It is incredibly frustrating when criminals manage to stay a step ahead of sophisticated companies and their customers. Target and its corporate peers have plenty of motivation to continually upgrade their security safeguards—the retailer is feeling the heat from understandably anxious customers. Fraud-resistant cards equipped with smart chips instead of magnetic strips are starting to appear in the U.S. Yet these scams occur with disturbing frequency and, as in the Target case, on a mind-boggling scale.

It was good to see federal prosecutors bring charges this summer against a brazen ring of alleged foreign card thieves. Losses ran into hundreds of millions of dollars. One of the defendants was among those charged in a separate indictment with hacking into New York financial institutions, including the Nasdaq stock exchange.

The attackers used a sophisticated division of labor to hide their tracks, with no single person hosting a Web server, breaking into a site and fetching the valuable data. That decentralized style of operation is typical of Russian organized-crime syndicates, prosecutors allege. When an attack on the supermarket chain Hannaford was noticed, according to the indictment, one alleged accomplice in the case messaged a defendant to say that, "Hannaford will spend millions to upgrade their security!! lol." The reply: "They would better pay us to not hack them again."

It pays to watch your own accounts.

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The 10 worst regulations of 2013

By JAMES GATTUSO and DIANE KATZ
THE HERITAGE FOUNDATION

2 013 will be remembered for many things, not least the miles of red tape that were imposed on Americans. It has been a very busy year indeed for regulators, who imposed new dictates on everything from the food we eat, to the loans we obtain, and the health insurance we buy.

Which are the worst? There are no objective standards to measure such things, but here is our take:

10 Forced flacking for Christmas trees. In its latest version of the \$1 trillion farm bill, the House approved a provision to require the Department of Agriculture to impose a tax of 15 cents on every fresh Christmas tree to fund a promotion campaign for the industry. This is a reincarnation of a program USDA wanted to impose in 2011, scotched due to a public outcry.

9 Genetic testing gag order. In early December, the Food and Drug Administration ordered a company called "23andMe" to stop marketing its home genetic testing kits. There was nothing unsafe about the product; the FDA simply says that the tests might not be accurate and could prompt other, unnecessary, medical testing. But surely that is a decision Americans can make for themselves.

8 Mail mandates. The U.S. Postal Service is hardly known for its efficiency. Part of the reason is that this government-owned enterprise operates under strict limits imposed by Congress. Thus, for instance, plans this spring to move to five-day-per-week delivery were blocked by congressional rules. No wonder the USPS is losing loads of money and putting taxpayers at risk.

7 Billions for boilers. The Obama administration in January finalized a punishing set of regulations controlling emissions from 17,000 boilers nationwide used to generate electricity and provide heat for factories. The Environmental Protection Agency estimated upfront costs of the rule at nearly \$5 billion, although this is disputed as absurdly low by those affected.

6 Pay cap populism. The Securities and Exchange Commission in September proposed to require companies disclose the ratio of CEO compensation to the median earnings of all employees. This was among several dictates in the Dodd-Frank act with no purpose other than to stoke populist anger about wage "inequality."

5 Carbon inflation. In June, government regulators, not supported by economics or science, increased by a whopping 50 percent their estimates of the value of decreased carbon

emissions. This bloated estimate, while not in itself a regulation, will allow regulators to "justify" a host of new carbon restrictions, even if their benefits do not really outweigh the costs to the economy and consumers.

4 Diet dictates. The diet dictators at the Food and Drug Administration want to ban trans fats in food under the notion that any ingestion of any amount of this food additive is inherently unsafe. The cost of the ban is estimated at about \$8 billion, in addition to Americans' loss of some of their favorite foods.

3 Mortgage micromanagement. The new Consumer Financial Protection Bureau went into high gear this year, issuing hundreds of pages of new rules restricting mortgage writing. Virtually every aspect of financing a home will be governed by rules set in Washington.

2 Finance for lawyers. The 900-plus page "Volcker Rule," adopted by five separate financial regulatory agencies in early December, limits bank "proprietary" trading, meaning trades on their own accounts, rather than on behalf of clients. For three years, the rule was stalled as regulators tried to separate undesirable speculation from economically essential investment. It's still doubtful they got it right. What it does do, is create a boon for lawyers in the inevitable litigation to follow.

1 Failed health mandates. Finalized early in 2013, these rules—a key part of the Obamacare health insurance scheme—impose coverage requirements for individual health insurance policies. Required services for all policies range from maternity care (regardless of gender) to substance abuse treatment to pediatric care (even for the childless). This mandate famously caused millions of Americans to lose their insurance policies, despite presidential assurances that "if you like your plan, you can keep your plan." For that, it earns our recognition as the worst rule of 2013.

As active as regulators were in 2013, do not look for them to slow down next year. Already in the pipeline are dozens of new rules covering health care, finance, global warming and more. It is anybody's guess which will be on the 2014 list. The only safe bet is that consumers will lose choices and all Americans will emerge with less freedom.

James L. Gattuso is senior research fellow for regulatory policy in the Roe Institute for Economic Policy Studies at The Heritage Foundation, where Diane Katz is a research fellow in regulatory policy.

Bahu na Sakan `13

I dañkulu na maribahan rinikohen kontribusion tax un` seriosu na señat na mampos chafleg i kinalamten ekonomian iya Marianas. Maseha manu` un` atan mañoñoğñug ni manadan dibi. Desde fondu para pagamienton man-ritirau ni tinahoñg \$12 miyon pesus ni pilalo`pu` \$18 miyon pesus na dibin kandet yan otu siha obligasion. Estague` na dadalag dumalalag hit halom gi finaton 2014—mas dibi ke fuetsan kahan iya Marianas. Esta namatman sa` maseha hokog fondu i kaha, sige ha` mañgare-ra offisiat publiku siha chagu na lugat kulan todu felis kinalamten i tanu`. Estague` `nai talilie` diskuidu siha ni ti debu u fan masusede gi halom man-loka` na lañgat dibi. Taya` satton na inadahe gi ap-penas na fondun publiku. Debi i lehislatura u aprueba un` lai para umaprohibe kumarera mientras guagua ha` dibiña i gobietnon iya Marianas. Yangin ti ma-ataha este na baban bisiu pues uttimoña i famaguon Marianas u in-apase dibin man-diskuidau na offisiat publiku siha. Taya` rason na para ta sede este na diskuidu.

Sustansiau na asuntu

Ti hu komprende i masotta man-sustansiau siha na asuntun lina-hyan kulan machaleg chiba gi puntan kantit. Esta sumehayu` para bai` komprende haf` na taiguine masusede. Man-tinane` pinegan tablon soñgsoñg siha yan kasamienton pinalao`ana giya New Zealand yan otu “junket” dimas de uma-ina haf` na sumen fatsu i ekonomian i tanu`. Ni unu humatsa fotmat kalañke`ña gi este na asuntu. Ai na linastima i tisun kotbata. Sige hu ina para bai komprende haf` na taiguine masusede. Era memegaña ti man-kapas gi fotmat na che`chu` linahyan piot`nai mattu gi man-sustansiau siha na asuntu. Gi mismu tiempu, ti debi i

botadot na u e`esalau sa` sumasaunau gi este na ridu. Enfin, mauleg ta atan dinuebu haf` satton diniseha-ta gi eleksion 2014 na sakan. Klaru na fuetsau debi u guaha kabales na chineneg para ta ta`lun umaregla areglu siha ni hagas fumuñot kualidat ha`anita. Prontu, debi este ta petsige yan komple na sakan. Yangin makat na biahe, pues konsidera yangin ta estira talen mas diskuidu. Uttimoña man-abende hit `an poduñg dadeg entalu` Oleai yan Garapan. Dios mihu futtuna-ta!

Pinasensia yan Inadahe

Hu komprende na megai gi offisiat publiku man-matotompu` gi halom sabenaten tituka pot man-ginacha` induktu gi dichu asuntun linahyan. Lau ti hu komprende haf` na masotta i asuntu siha kulan mohon todu felis linala` i publiku gi señgsoñg siha. Sige ha` mañgarera hiyuñg Marianas `nai gaige che`chu` niha guine. Hafa masusede? Mañgge i huramientu `nai in` aksepta para in` adelanta linala` i tautau ni in` representa gi hegsu` I Deni? Kau man-inipos hamyu ni asuntun publiku siha na in` dagau ñaihon gi un` banda? Siempre u fattu i ora `nai u guaha kabales rinikonosen haf` kada unu kontribusioña gi dichu kuestion pot kualidat linala` ni in` hasñ-gune umupus. Dalai `ste! Empleau lokue` mampos mañgontentu diskuidau siha na setbisiu kulan mohon siha man-madidibi lau kontribusion tax publiku uma-papase. De dios mihu na che`chu` muron!

`Nai kara` i kahan Marianas

Hu tuñgu desde ke ha tutuhongue` i federat mumueba para u amot Marianas atoridat immigration na siempre u basnag yan kara` kahan iya Marianas. Masusede! I politikan sanhilu` hafanue` hit na fuetsudu i federat gi este na asuntu. Gi mismu tiempu ha luñu` yan sen-punu` ekonomian i tanu`. Tumunog papa` gi señgsoñg i pinadese `nai tat ti hiniga`

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune



John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands.

miserapble na chinatsaga. Matuñgu na tai mina iya Marianas `nai siña mohon ha katsun ñaihongue`. Lau humalom i federat sin ditension ya ha amot Mari-anas atoridat immigration. Ti man-mamadese i offisiat publiku sa` gi uttimu `nai malagu ayu na milag disision federat i señgsoñg `nai ha luñugue`. Dimas de u petsige ensegidas inadahen machalapon halom guma`, sige makrusa i airen yan tasin Pasifiku makeke lie` kau gagaige ha` i tasi yan mapagahes. Humuyuñg i fakterian magagu yan man-dañkulu siha na komet-siaten Japon. Mas ke \$7 Biyon pesus machuda` huyuñg gi sagua` Marianas, fondu ni hagas lumililiku` guine. Taigue esta ennau na moneda ayu mina` kosus i kahan tano`ta. Dispues, kulan mohon tinife` lañayon na maña sige i man-ma`gas ma-ayeg haye para u halom na kometsiante yan haye gi kanton potta. Estague` mas umesague yan pumunu` kinalamten bisnis guine sa` maudai dispues gi “kau hafa para guahu”. Inipos na che`chu` satbahe yan makatrefe i para umasakifisia i publiku pot betsan niha. Estaba este i “haf` para guahu” sospechu `nai gaige. Dispues, matulaika ya fumotmat na kontodu i uttimu na inañgoghu madirite gi halom lañgat disintegredat. Lastima! Felis Año Nuebu!

OMG, it’s time to update carols, LOL

By REG HENRY
PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

The Christmas season is meant to be a special time of serenity and contemplation. In the age of instant communication, how we wish that were still true. Sadly, herewith are the new lyrics of the age:
While shepherds tweeted a lot by night
All chillin’ on the ground
The message from the cloud came down
On iPhones there around
Good King Wenceslas texted out
To his old friend Stephen
Storm Tracker News predicted
thereabout
Precipitation deep and crisp and even

Brightly shone their screens that night
Though the service was cruel
When a poor dude came in sight
On a snow day from school
Hither, dude, and stand by me
With your smartphone beeping
Yonder dudette, who is she?
Where’s her email keeping?
King, she lives a good ways hence
Tweeting up the mountain
Right against the parking lot fence
Near the mall fountain
Bring me burgers, and make ‘em fine
Let us not further dither
Thou and I will see her fine
When we message her hither
Dude and monarch, forth they went
Messaging forth together
Though rude comments they sent
Not all of ‘em on the weather

Hashtagging through the snow
On a one bar open phone
Over the ether we go
Taking selfies all the way (Lol, lol, lol!)
Bells on Bob’s apps ring
Making messages bright
What fun it is to text and ring
A tweeting song tonight
Verizon bills, Verizon bills
Verizon all the way!
Oh what fun it is to text and ride
In a two-thumb escapade, hey!
On the first day of Christmas
My true love texted me
U want a partridge in a pear tree?
On the second day of Christmas
My true love tweeted me
OK, two turtle doves and
A partridge in a pear tree
On the third day of Christmas
My true love messaged me

Like, three french hens
Two turtle doves and
A partridge in a pear tree
On the fourth day of Christmas
My true love Instagrammed me
Four calling birds
Three french hens
Two turtle doves and
A partridge in a pear tree
On the fifth day of Christmas
My true love’s battery failed
Whatever
Twas the night before Christmas
When all through the house
Not a creature was stirring
Except for the computer mouse
The Wi-Fi was working
Near the chimney with care
To track St. Nicholas’ movements
Soon to be there
The children were nestled
All snug in their beds
While visions of Grand Theft Auto

Danced in their heads
And mamma in her ‘kerchief
And I in my ballcap
Had just settled before Skype
For a long winter chat
When out on the lawn
There arose such a clatter
I sprang from the screen
To see what was the matter
Away to real time I flew
With no further banter
Grabbing my phone
For a selfie with Santa
As used to be said in the olden days
when curmudgeons like myself wrote
on paper with quill pens plucked
from a goose, to the irritation of the
fowl, Happy Christmas to all and to
all a good-night.
Reg Henry is deputy editorial-page
editor for the Pittsburgh Post-Ga-
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RedBlueAmerica: What was the most important story of 2013?

By JOEL MATHIS and BEN BOYCHUK
MCCLATCHY-TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

There was no presidential election in 2013, but the year provided America with plenty of stories to care about: The launch of Obamacare, the near-war with Syria over chemical weapons, the Boston Marathon bombings, and many more. Some stories were one-offs; others will ripple forward into the future. Which story in 2013 might have the most impact going forward? Joel Mathis and Ben Boychuk, the RedBlueAmerica columnists, debate the issue. JOEL MATHIS: The most consequential story of 2013? Easy: The so-called “fast-food strikes” that occurred at restaurants around the country. Why the most consequential? Because it threw into stark relief a reality that has increasingly concerned both liberals and economists for years: Income inequality is growing in this country, creating a system in which a few wealthy citizens stand to absorb all the wealth while the rest of us work harder and harder for ever-diminishing returns. That inequality has been growing steadily for 40 years, masked to some extent by the rise of a two-working-parent middle class, and then to a greater extent by various bubbles—tech, then housing—that made it appear wealth was growing along with productivity in this country. It wasn’t. We know that now. We know that in this painfully pitiful recovery, one of the fastest-growing job segments nationally is in fast food. We know that the occupants of those jobs are not, as popular myth would have it, just teens, but plenty of working-

age and mid-career adults. These are hard-working people who cannot afford to live on the minimum wage that the fast-food restaurants pay them, much less save money to send kids to college, without resorting to public subsidies like food stamps to make ends meet. Which means, yes, that you the taxpayer are already subsidizing the wages of McDonald’s employees. Over the next few years, how to either accommodate or reverse those trends will be at the center of our politics. Some conservatives have already talked about creating a taxpayer-funded national guaranteed minimum wage so that companies that offer low-paying, low-skill jobs can stay competitive with one another without doing anything so rash as spend their own profits to pay a living wage to their workforce. Many Republicans have spent recent years pretending income inequality doesn’t matter. That answer is no longer viable. Our next debates will be about how to fix it. And 2013 will be seen as the year those debates got under way in earnest. BEN BOYCHUK: Tough year, 2013. It’s not easy to pin down just one vital development. The U.S. Supreme Court’s decisions in June on same-sex marriage will reverberate across the legal, political and cultural landscapes for years to come. Next up: the fight over religious liberty. New Yorkers’ decision to elect as their mayor Bill de Blasio, a left-wing populist firebrand, might well have set the stage to undo two decades of work that made one of the most dangerous cities in America into one of the safest. President Obama signaled the world that U.S. foreign policy could not be taken seriously. If Obama wasn’t prepared to back his words with deeds in Syria, he never should have drawn a “red line” over President Bashar al-Assad’s use of chemical weapons against

civilians. He blinked. But in the end, it would have to be the self-immolation of Obama’s signature domestic policy achievement that will be remembered as the most important story of this storied year. Obamacare’s spectacular flameout had little to do with a website’s failure to launch. The president drew a preposterous red line with health-care reform, too. “If you like your doctor, you will be able to keep your doctor, period,” he famously said. “If you like your health care plan, you’ll be able to keep your health care plan, period. No one will take it away, no matter what.” A few million insurance policy cancellations later, most everyone recognizes the president’s promise was as empty as his threats against Assad. But the enterprise was clearly in trouble when the president in July decided to delay until 2015 enforcement of the law’s employer mandate. That’s the requirement that all employers with more than 50 workers provide health insurance. Many employers had already begun slashing full-time employees’ hours to soften the mandate’s impact. Now the administration is selectively postponing enforcement of the law’s individual mandate, which has been the cause of so much angst in recent weeks. All of the White House’s delays and ad hoc fixes are mere palliatives. The law itself is fatally flawed. Perhaps Congress can finally repeal it in 2014. Ben Boychuk ((bboychuk@city-journal.org) is associate editor of the Manhattan Institute’s City Journal. Joel Mathis ((joelmmathis@gmail.com) is associate editor for Philadelphia Magazine. Website: www.facebook.com/benandjoel.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Mostly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 20 to 25 mph.	Mostly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 20 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Mostly Cloudy	▲87 ▼77
Palau	Partly Cloudy	▲86 ▼76
Yap	Partly Cloudy	▲87 ▼76
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	▲86 ▼77
Pohnpei	Mostly Cloudy	▲86 ▼77
Kosrae	Mostly Cloudy	▲86 ▼77
Majuro	Mostly Cloudy	▲87 ▼77

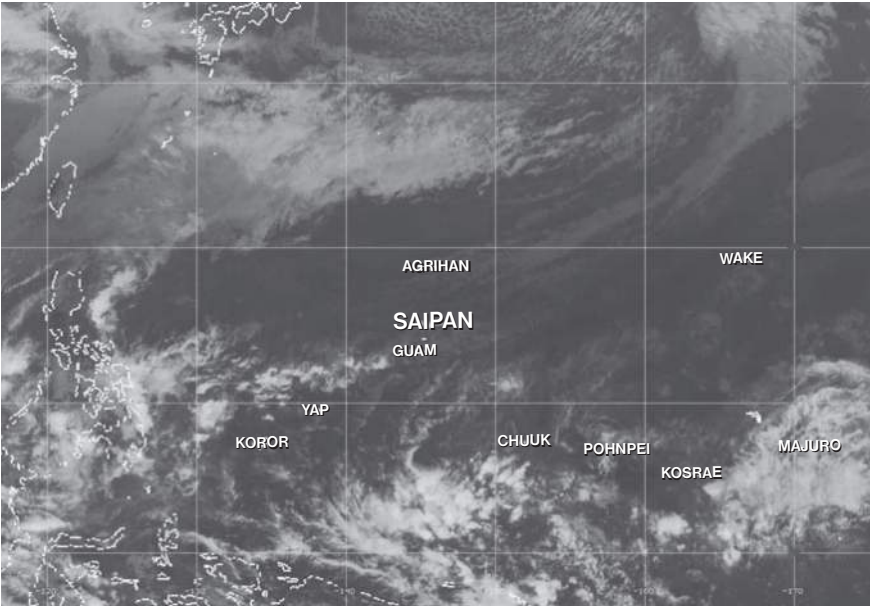
Around The Globe

Auckland	Partly Cloudy	▲69 ▼62
Beijing	Sunny	▲37 ▼15
Hong Kong	Sunny	▲64 ▼52
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲81 ▼69
London	Partly Cloudy	▲44 ▼39
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	▲78 ▼49
Manila	Thundershowers	▲88 ▼77
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	▲81 ▼57
Miami	Thundershowers	▲84 ▼69
New York	Partly Cloudy	▲31 ▼27
Osaka	Showers	▲50 ▼44
Paris	Partly Cloudy	▲47 ▼40
Pusan	Windy	▲49 ▼27
Rome	Rain	▲56 ▼45
Salem	Partly Cloudy	▲48 ▼30
San Francisco	Sunny	▲67 ▼44
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	▲38 ▼18
Tokyo	Showers	▲52 ▼41
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲37 ▼31

Tides

Saipan Harbor			
1:18 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.3 Feet
7:07 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.6 Feet
1:47 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
9:00 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.5 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2013
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front is found just north of two to island, north of 25N. Extensive cloudiness and patchy rain are occurring along and north of a line extending from 25N148E to 20N130E to beyond 25N. A cold front curves southwestward from north of Wake Island at 25N165E to 20N160E, then continues as a shear line across Guam and Rota to beyond 130E at 10N. Scattered showers are found along and up to 175 miles north of the boundary from 130E to 146E. A few thunderstorms are present west of 140E. A trade-wind disturbance is generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms south of Chuuk and Pohnpei, south of a line from 3N140E to 6N151E to 2N163E. Trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms east of Kosrae and south of Majuro between 1N and 7N from 165E to 180.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:41 AM	5:54 PM
Friday	6:41 AM	5:55 PM
Saturday	6:41 AM	5:55 PM
Sunday	6:42 AM	5:56 PM
Monday	6:42 AM	5:57 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	12:16 AM	12:26 PM
Friday	1:07 AM	1:09 PM
Saturday	2:01 AM	1:56 PM
Sunday	2:59 AM	2:47 PM
Monday	3:59 AM	3:44 PM

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- SAMUT SARI Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

- CAMPUS BULLETIN Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

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SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Saturday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of \$160. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 21, 2013

DEPARTURES	ARRIVALS
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM) UA5070 4:15am 5:05am Daily UA5068 8:40am 9:30am Daily UA5039 1:35pm 3:10pm 1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota UA5038 2:20pm 3:10pm 2, 3, 6 UA5078 6:05pm 6:55pm Daily UA5072 9:50pm 10:40pm Daily	GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN UA5069 2:45am 3:35am Daily UA5071 7:15am 8:05am Daily UA5039 12:10pm 1:00pm 1, 4, 5, 7 UA5038 12:10pm 1:50pm 2, 3, 6 via Rota UA5077 4:45pm 5:35pm Daily UA5079 8:30pm 9:20pm Daily
SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP) UA5039 1:35pm 2:10pm 1, 4, 5, 7	GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP) UA5038 12:10pm 12:45pm 2, 3, 6
ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM) UA5039 2:40pm 3:10pm 1, 4, 5, 7	ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN UA5038 1:15pm 1:50pm 2, 3, 6
SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX) OZ119 4:00am 6:40am Daily	OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN OZ120 9:50pm 2:20am+1 Daily
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT) DL287 6:05am 8:40am 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 DL297 4:30pm 7:20pm Daily	NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN DL298 10:25am 3:00pm Daily DL288 8:55pm 1:30am+1 1, 3, 4, 5, 7
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS) OZ608 3:10am 6:20am 1, 4, 5, 7	BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN OZ607 9:00pm 1:50am+1 3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN) OZ606 2:10am 6:00am 1 DZ102 2:20am 5:50am 3 OZ606 2:40am 6:30am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 OZ6063 3:30am 7:20am 4, 7 DZ104 2:00pm 5:30pm 6 OZ604 3:20pm 7:10pm Daily	SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN DZ101 8:30am 2:00pm 3 OZ603 9:00am 2:20pm Daily DZ103 7:30pm 1:00am+1 6 OZ605 7:40pm 1:00am+1 7 OZ605 8:10pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 OZ6053 9:10pm 2:30am+1 3, 6
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG) 3U8648 6:10am 8:40am 1, 4, 5, 7	SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN 3U8647 10:40pm 5:00am+1 3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK) MU764 4:10am 8:00am 1, 5	BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN MU763 7:55pm 3:10am+1 4, 7
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN) 3U8646 4:20am 7:30am 2, 6	GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN 3U8645 7:40pm 3:00am+1 1, 5
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL) OZ606/701 2:10am 11:15am 1 via ICN OZ606/701 2:40am 11:15am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN UA5070/191 4:15am 9:05am 1 via ICN DL287/473 6:05am 10:30pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 via NRT UA5068/PR111 8:40am 4:45pm 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM UA5039/183 1:35pm 9:30pm 5 via Guam UA5039/183 1:35pm 9:50pm 1, 4, 7 via Guam UA5038/183 2:20pm 9:30pm 2 via GUM UA5078/183 6:05pm 9:50pm 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM OZ604/703 3:20pm 11:00pm Daily via ICN	MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN OZ704/603 12:10am 2:20pm Daily PR110/UA5072 7:35am 5:35pm 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM DL172/288 7:40am 1:30am+1 1, 3, 4, 5, 7 via NRT UA190/5079 10:00am 5:35pm 3, 6 via GUM OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN UA184/5071 10:55pm 8:05am+1 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM UA184/5071 11:59pm 8:05am+1 2, 5 via GUM
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG) OZ606/721 2:10am 11:50am 1 via ICN OZ606/721 2:40am 11:50am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN UA5068/179 8:40am 10:35pm 1, 5 via GUM UA5038/179 2:20pm 10:35pm 3, 6 via GUM OZ604/749 3:20pm 11:00pm Daily via ICN	HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN OZ746/603 12:30am 2:20pm Daily via ICN OZ722/605 1:15pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ724/605 1:50pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN UA180/5071 11:10pm 8:05am+1 1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; VLK: Vladivostok Air; SYL: Yakutia Air; D: Dynamic Airways.

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily	FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily	FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
Guam-Rota				FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily	FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan							
FRE 100	17:50	18:20	Daily				
Saipan-Rota				Tinian-Saipan			
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily	FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
FRE 400	10:20	10:45	Daily	FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily	FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily	FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily	FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily	FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily	FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily	FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily	FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily				

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- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Sailors spread holiday cheer with at-risk youth



Sailors from the Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS *Howard* play a volleyball game with at-risk youth during a community relations event at the Department of Youth Affairs in Mangilao, Guam, on Dec. 24.

U.S. NAVY/JOANNA DELFIN



USS *Howard* sailors play a volleyball game with at-risk youth during a community relations event at the Department of Youth Affairs in Mangilao, Guam, on Dec. 24.

U.S. NAVY/JOANNA DELFIN

By JOANNA DELFIN

JOINT REGION MARIANAS PUBLIC AFFAIRS

MANGILAO, Guam—USS *Howard* sailors shared the holiday spirit with at-risk youth from the Department of Youth Affairs in Mangilao during a community relations project while in port in Guam on Dec. 24.

The sailors, currently deployed within the Pacific area of responsibility, participated in various activities such as basketball, volleyball, and ping pong. Youth had the opportunity to sit down with the sailors as they discussed various topics from navy careers and future life choices to favorite basketball teams.

Personnel Specialist 1st Class Stuart Thomas participated in the COMREL event and said he was glad to be part of the activities especially during the holiday season as it gave him a chance to talk to the youth about his experiences and hopefully

inspire them to do better.

“We like to keep up the good relationships between the Navy and our foreign countries and let them know we’re here to support in any way we can,” he said. “I hope they look at us and say, ‘Hey maybe I’d like to be like them. They’re out here, they’re supporting us while also being in the Navy and you get a little bit of both worlds.’ Just because they might not be able to see their families, we’re here to see them; we’re here to help them celebrate Christmas.”

DYA director Adonis Mendiola said he was grateful to the Navy and *Howard* sailors for volunteering to meet, interact with, and talk to the department’s clients.

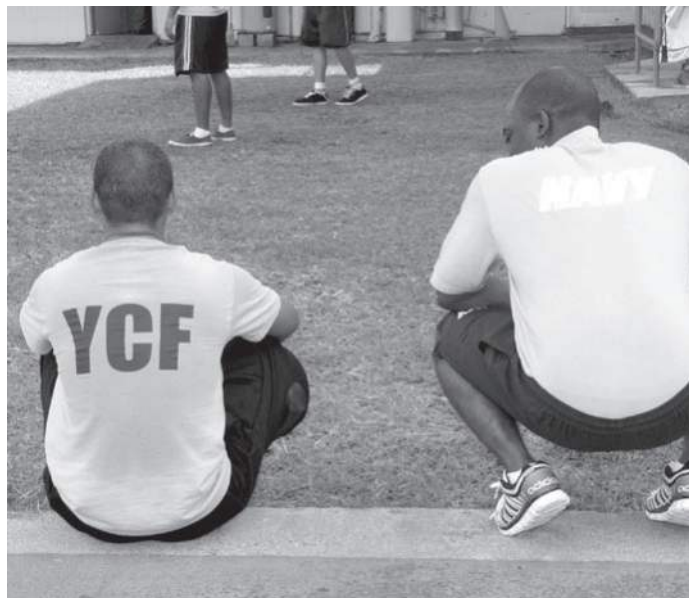
“Obviously it is the season of Christmas, and I think the USS *Howard* and the Navy want to reach out and it’s important that we all reach out

even to people who seem undeserving,” he said. “I think it’s very grateful for the folks at the USS *Howard* and the U.S. Navy to come out and touch the lives of our locals.”

As an Army veteran, Mendiola said he understands the importance of the military’s involvement with the community as it helps civilians understand more and appreciate the service and sacrifice service members make.

“This interaction gives [clients] a perspective that the freedoms that the armed forces provide and protect are something very much to be cherished,” he said.

Howard sailors will also spend time at the St. Dominic’s Senior Care Home today, Dec. 26, to participate in various activities such as arts and crafts, caroling and assisting residents with meals.



Personnel Specialist 1st Class Stuart Thomas, assigned to the USS *Howard*, takes a break from playing basketball to speak with an at-risk youth during a community relations event at the Department of Youth Affairs in Mangilao, Guam, on Dec. 24.

U.S. NAVY/JOANNA DELFIN



Yeoman 3rd Class Justin Fackler, assigned to the Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS *Howard*, speaks with an at-risk youth during a community relations event at the Department of Youth Affairs in Mangilao, Guam, on Dec. 24.

U.S. NAVY/JOANNA DELFIN



Capt. David Zook, USS *Howard* commanding officer, takes time to speak with an at-risk youth during a community relations event at the Department of Youth Affairs in Mangilao, Guam, on Dec. 24.

U.S. NAVY/JOANNA DELFIN



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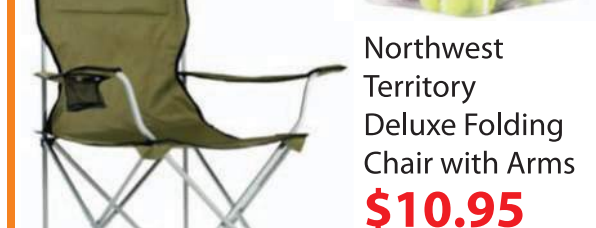
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Dispenser
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Business

Tablets a hit with kids but...

NEW YORK (AP)—Tablet computers are so easy to use that even a 3-year-old can master them.

And that has some pediatricians and other health experts worried.

Since navigating a tablet generally doesn't require the ability to type or read, children as young as toddlers can quickly learn how to stream movies, scroll through family photos or play simple games.

That ease-of-use makes tablets—and smartphones—popular with busy parents who use them to pacify their kids during car rides, restaurant outings or while they're at home trying to get dinner on the table. And many feel a little less guilty about it if they think there's educational value to the apps and games their children use.

The devices are expected to rank among the top holiday gifts for children this year. Gadget makers such as Samsung have introduced tablets specifically designed for kids and many manufacturers of adult tablets now include parental controls. Those products are in addition to the slew of kiddie tablets produced by electronic toy makers such as LeapFrog, Vtech and Toys R Us.

But some experts note there's no evidence that screen time—whether from a TV or tablet—provides any educational or developmental benefits for babies



In this Tuesday, Dec. 3, 2013, photo, Marc Cohen, 5, uses a Sesame Street app on his tablet at home in New York.

their tablets, then it's just like watching TV, which has a limited ability to engage a child.

He also notes that parents need to be mindful of whether tablet time is replacing more important activities such as sleeping, reading or interacting with adults. He says that while the Ameri-

much is too much, she says.

For older children, Briggs says too much tablet use can slow social development. She notes that the solitary nature of the activity means that kids aren't using that time to learn how to make friends or pick up on social cues.

Some experts, however, be-

can Academy of Pediatrics recommends no more than one to two hours of screen time a day for kids over the age of two, he thinks one hour is plenty.

"The single most important thing for children is time with parents and caregivers," he says. "Nothing is more important in terms of social development. If time with the tablet comes at the expense of that, that's not good."

Dr. Rahil Briggs, a pediatric psychologist at New York's Montefiore Medical Center, says tablet usage needs to be limited for the youngest of children, because too much screen time can slow language development. And since there's very little research out there so far, experts still don't know exactly how

lieve tablets and smartphones possess unique educational benefits.

Jill Buban, dean of the School of Education at Post University in Waterbury Conn., says the more children absorb and understand technology before they start school, the more comfortable they'll feel when they enter a classroom for the first time.

But she says even the best educational apps must be monitored by parents and limited. She recommends no more than 30 minutes of tablet usage at a time in light of the short attention spans of most young kids.

"There's so much media out there and so much marketing," she says. "It's all about smart choices and research, whether it's an app on a tablet or a TV show."

the price increase immediately. Forever stamps, good for first-class postage whatever the future rate, can be purchased at the lower price until the new rate is effective Jan. 26.

The higher rate will last no more than two years, allowing the Postal Service to recoup \$2.8 billion in losses.

Bulk mail, periodicals and package service rates will rise

6 percent, a decision that drew immediate consternation from the mail industry. The new price of a postcard stamp, raised by a penny to 34 cents in November, also is effective next month.

The last price increase for stamps was in January, when the cost of sending a letter rose by a penny to 46 cents. A postcard also increased by one cent to 33 cents.

Nation

AS SIGNUP DEADLINE NEARS

Health care site put to the test

CHICAGO (AP)—The government's retooled health care website was put to its biggest test yet as record numbers of Americans rushed to beat Tuesday's extended deadline for signing up for insurance.

After a disastrous, glitch-filled rollout in October, HealthCare.gov, where people in 36 states can shop for coverage, received 2 million visits Monday, its highest one-day total, the government said.

Traffic was not as heavy on Tuesday but still high, White House spokeswoman Tara McGuinness said. She had no immediate estimate of visitors or how many succeeded in obtaining insurance before the midnight deadline.

"The site is performing well under intense consumer traffic," said Kurt DelBene, a former Microsoft executive appointed last week to take over management of the online marketplace. "With the highest volumes we have seen to date, response time is fast and the error rating is low."

Error rates were lower than 1 in 200, and pages loaded quickly, in less than a half-second, officials said.

For a multitude of reasons, including technical difficulties with the site or trouble under-

standing the instructions, thousands of people sought telephone help and wound up waiting on hold on Christmas Eve at the government's call center.

Ian Stewart of Salt Lake City said he and his wife, both students, had been trying for weeks to complete their application on the federal site, thwarted by computer error messages each time.

On Tuesday morning, while visiting relatives in Colorado for Christmas, they reached a call center counselor who succeeded in enrolling them. The "silver" plan they chose will cost them \$241 a month after a cost-lowering tax credit.

"We're relieved that we got it working, elated that we got insurance again and very frustrated that it took this long," Stewart said.

More than 110,000 people had called the government's help line by Tuesday afternoon, with wait times averaging 27 minutes, officials said. On Monday, the call center received more than 250,000 calls, a one-day record.

Monday was the sign-up deadline for people wanting coverage at the start of the new year. But the Obama administration pushed back the dead-

line a day to deal with heavy traffic from procrastinators.

"We see this intense traffic as a sign that people are eager for affordable health insurance," said Julie Bataille, a spokeswoman for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the federal agency in charge of the overhaul.

While there were no immediate reports of any major glitches, the White House said that people who can show they missed the deadline because of problems with the website may still be able to get covered by Jan. 1 on a case-by-case basis. Those who try to sign up for the first time after the deadline passes can still get coverage, but it won't start until Feb. 1.

The one-day grace period was just the latest in a string of delays and reversals, and critics of President Barack Obama's signature program seized on it as more evidence that the overhaul is in trouble.

"The amazing, ever-expanding deadline? It's clearly a sign of desperation by the administration to do everything they can to increase the number of people signing up," said health economist Gail Wilensky, who ran Medicare for President George H.W. Bush.

Another court defeat for Utah on gay marriage

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—A federal appeals court has refused yet again to stop gay marriage in Utah, making it more likely that same-sex weddings in the home of the Mormon church are here to stay for the immediate future.

The 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals' rejection of Utah's request for an emergency order to put gay marriage on hold marked yet another legal setback for the state. Utah lawyers have repeatedly struck out in their bid to block gay marriage, getting rejected on four occasions in recent days.

Utah's last chance to tempo-

rarily stop the marriages would be a long-shot request before U.S. Supreme Court. That's what the Utah Attorney General's Office is prepared to do, spokesman Ryan Bruckman said. Gov. Gary Herbert's office declined to comment on the decision.

"We're disappointed in the ruling, but we just have to take it to the next level," Bruckman said.

Carl Tobias, a constitutional law professor at Virginia's University of Richmond who has tracked legal battles for gay marriage, said he expects the U.S. Supreme Court to

make a decision by Friday. He thinks Utah faces long odds to get their stay granted, considering two courts have already rejected it and marriages have been going on for days now.

"The longer this goes on, the less likely it becomes that any court is going to entertain a stay," Tobias said.

Judge Robert J. Shelby's decision last week to strike down a 2004 voter-approved gay marriage ban sent gay couples rushing to county clerk offices to get marriage licenses. About 700 gay couples have obtained licenses since Friday, with most of the activity in Salt Lake City.

Astronauts complete rare Christmas Eve spacewalk

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP)—Space station astronauts repaired a crippled cooling system during a rare Christmas Eve spacewalk Tuesday, braving a "mini blizzard" of noxious ammonia as they popped in a new pump.

It was the second spacewalk in four days for U.S. astronauts Rick Mastracchio and Michael Hopkins, and only the second Christmas Eve spacewalk ever.

NASA ordered up the spacewalks to revive a critical cooling loop at the International Space Station. All nonessential equipment had to be turned off

when the line conked out Dec. 11, and many science experiments halted.

With Tuesday's success, the cooling system should be restored and all equipment up and running by this weekend, according to NASA. "It's the best Christmas ever," Mission Control radioed as the 7 1/2-hour spacewalk came to a close.

"Merry Christmas to everybody," replied Hopkins. "It took a couple weeks to get her done, but we got it."

Mastracchio and Hopkins removed the faulty ammonia pump during Saturday's

spacewalk. On Tuesday, they installed the fresh pump.

Standing on the end of the station's main robotic arm, Hopkins clutched the 780-pound, refrigerator-size pump with both hands as he headed toward its installation spot, and then slid it in. An astronaut working inside, Japan's Koichi Wakata, gingerly steered the arm and its precious load.

"Mike Hopkins taking a special sleigh ride on this Christmas Eve," Mission Control commentator Rob Navias said as the space station soared over the Pacific.

1st-class stamps to cost 49 cents as of Jan. 26

WASHINGTON (AP)—Mailing a letter is about to get a little more expensive.

Regulators on Tuesday approved a temporary price hike of 3 cents for a first-class stamp, bringing the charge to 49 cents a letter in an effort to help the Postal Service recover from severe mail decreases brought on by the 2008 economic downturn.

Many consumers won't feel

Asia

Government body grim on Taiwan military prospects

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP)—A government monitoring body has cast serious doubts on Taiwan's ability to launch a credible all-volunteer military force, undermining a crucial plank in President Ma Ying-jeou's defense policy, and raising difficult questions about the island's ability to defend itself against any attack from China.

In a report unveiled Tuesday, the Control Yuan quoted high-ranking retired military officers, including a former navy commander, as saying that the defense ministry's failure to attract enough recruits to replace the existing conscription-based system spells bad news for Taiwan's military deterrent.

"My gravest concern is that the all-volunteer system may not be fully developed by the time the government scraps the conscription system," said Admiral Miao Yung-ching in the report. "Is it possible to suspend this to a later date?"

Taiwan's all-volunteer transi-

tion was supposed to have been completed by 2015 but in September the Defense Ministry delayed implementation for two years amid continuing recruiting failures.

During the first 11 months of 2013, the government says only 30 percent of the recruiting target of 28,531 was met.

Report co-author Huang Huaung-hsiung said the Defense Ministry's recruiting difficulties appeared to leave it with three options heading toward the 2017 deadline: lower force levels from the 175,000 target, opt for a further delay in implementation of the all-volunteer force or revert to the conscription system.

Responding to the Control Yuan report, the Defense Ministry said it is still on course for a 2017 transition to an all-volunteer military.

The transition to an all-volunteer force is an important part of President Ma's defense policy, despite his insistence that the

possibility of armed confrontation with China has receded substantially amid his efforts to lower tensions across the 150-kilometer- (100-mile) wide Taiwan strait through greater commercial engagement. That engagement has been the centerpiece of his administration since he came into office in May 2008.

China and Taiwan split after a civil war in 1949. Beijing continues to regard the democratic island of 23 million people as part of its territory and says it is committed to bringing it back into the fold—by persuasion if possible, by force if necessary.

Once boasting a standing force of more than 500,000 troops, Taiwan's enthusiasm for its military has declined greatly in recent years, paced by well-publicized horror stories about poor conditions for recruits and Ma's repeated failures to deliver on promises to devote at least 3 percent of GDP to military expenditures.

Activists: Ruling on gays hurts HIV fight in India

NEW DELHI (AP)—Gay-rights activists and health workers in India are warning that a new Supreme Court ruling criminalizing homosexuality will undo years of progress in fighting AIDS by driving gay and transgender people underground.

They say HIV services expanded and gay and transgender people became more likely to seek them out after a landmark 2009 ruling decriminalized same-sex acts by throwing out a colonial-era law. India's top court revived the law Dec. 11, saying it is up to the country's lawmakers—not the court—to change it.

Activists fear the ruling will make gays and transgender people too fearful to seek treatment or counseling, driving HIV infections up. Indian health officials said last year that annual new HIV infections among adults had fallen 57 percent over the previous decade.

The reinstated law calls homosexuality an "unnatural of-

fense" punishable by 10 years in jail. Criminal prosecutions were rare when the law was previously in force, but police used it to harass people and demand bribes.

"This law has made us all criminals," said Lakshmi Tripathi, a transgender activist who added that the law will stop many people from approaching doctors or health clinics for prevention or treatment for HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

"How can I go to an HIV/AIDS clinic?" asked Tripathi. "If I did, I can be hauled into jail for my lifestyle, for violating the law."

Health activists say that before the law was overturned in 2009, nongovernmental organizations that ran AIDS intervention centers faced the threat of police raids.

In 2005, police raided an HIV outreach center in the Indian capital and forced it to close, said Shaleen Rakesh of the India HIV/AIDS Alliance.

"This happened in New Del-

hi," he said. "The situation in small towns and in the rural hinterland is much worse."

UNAIDS said in a statement this month that the number of organizations providing HIV services to gay and transgender people rose more than 50 percent while homosexuality was decriminalized.

"After the 2009 ruling, we saw a jump in gay men, bisexuals and transgenders coming to public health centers on their own, seeking medical advice or treatment. They felt it was safe to do so," said Ashok Row Kavi of the Humsafar Trust, a group working with the gay community.

"Our big worry now is that they may stay away from health centers out of fear," he said.

India's reversal comes as gays and lesbians worldwide rack up significant victories in their quest for marriage equality and other rights. Same-sex marriage has legal recognition in 18 countries, 18 U.S. states and the District of Columbia.

China jails dad who tried to kill kid with needles

BEIJING (AP)—A court in northeastern China has sentenced a man to 10 years in prison for trying to kill his baby daughter by inserting sewing needles into her body, state media reported Wednesday.

A court in Heilongjiang province found Yin Zhihe guilty of attempting to murder his 2-month-old daughter in August, the official Xinhua News Agency said.

The court found that Yin wanted to kill the child because he believed that she was not his daughter, Xinhua reported.

Yin first inserted one needle into the baby's ribcage on Aug. 4. The next day, the baby's cries prompted her mother to take the child to the hospital, where the needle was found and surgically removed.

But Yin later inserted three more needles in the child's

chest, navel and stomach. The needles were removed in an operation but had already caused respiratory failure and injuries to the baby's organs.

The court granted Yin some leniency because he turned himself in to police and the baby survived the attacks, Xinhua said.

A DNA test showed that Yin was the girl's biological father, the report said.

World

Bomb blast kills 15 in Egypt



An Egyptian man makes his way through rubble at the scene of an explosion at a police headquarters building that killed at least a dozen people, wounded more than 100, and left scores buried under the rubble, in the Nile Delta city of Mansoura, 110 kilometers (70 miles) north of Cairo, Egypt, Tuesday, Dec. 24, 2013.

MANSOURA, Egypt (AP)—A powerful blast ripped through a police headquarters in an Egyptian Nile Delta city Tuesday while top security officials met to work out arrangements for an upcoming constitutional referendum, killing 15 people and wounding more than 100 in the deadliest bombing yet in a campaign of violence blamed on Islamic militants.

The attack underlined the vulnerability of Egypt's police and their weakness in keeping security amid fears of in-

creased militant violence in the lead-up to the Jan. 14-15 referendum.

The vote is a key step in the country's political transition after the military's ouster of Islamist President Mohammed Morsi in July, but it has further stoked political tensions, with Morsi's Muslim Brotherhood protesting against the new charter.

Authorities quickly sought to pin blame for the blast on the Brotherhood, the military-backed interim government's top political nemesis. With the

group continuing protests, the government has increasingly depicted it as directly behind the wave of violence, without providing evidence in public.

The attack hikes pressure on the government by anti-Islamists to take tougher action against the group, including enforcing a court-ordered ban on it, possibly declaring it a terrorist organization and passing a controversial harsh new anti-terrorism law. The Brotherhood condemned the attack and accused the government of scapegoating it.

UN says mass grave of 34 found in S. Sudan

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP)—U.N. investigators discovered a mass grave in a rebel-held city in South Sudan, the United Nations said Tuesday, as a possible opening occurred for negotiations to avert civil war in the world's newest country where ethnic violence has erupted.

In New York, the U.N. Security Council voted unanimously to beef up its peacekeeping force in South Sudan. It condemned targeted violence against civilians and ethnic communities and called for

"an immediate cessation of hostilities and the immediate opening of a dialogue."

The government, meanwhile, announced that its military forces had taken back another key city, Bor, from the rebels who held it over the last week.

The bodies were found in the town of Bentiu in oil-rich Unity state: one grave with 14 bodies and a site nearby with 20 bodies, said U.N. human rights office spokeswoman Ravina Shamdasani.

The government minister of information, Michael Makuei

Lueth, said Bentiu is under the control of rebels loyal to the country's former vice president, Riek Machar, indicating they were responsible for the killings.

The dead in Bentiu reportedly were ethnic Dinka who belonged to the Sudan People's Liberation Army, said Shamdasani, referring to government military forces.

South Sudan President Salva Kiir is Dinka, the country's largest ethnic group, while Machar is Nuer, the second-largest ethnic group.

Pope ushers in his first Christmas at Vatican

VATICAN CITY (AP)—Pope Francis has ushered in his first Christmas as pontiff, likening Jesus' birth to a burst of light on the sometimes dark moments of human history, marked by pride and ambition.

The 77-year-old Francis celebrated Christmas Eve Mass late Tuesday in St. Peter's Basilica, returning to rest in his Vatican lodgings barely 12 hours before he was due to return to the basilica.

At noon (1100 GMT) Wednesday, Francis was scheduled to deliver a tra-

ditional Christmas day message meant for a worldwide audience. Tens of thousands of tourists and Romans are expected to gather in St. Peter's Square for his speech and blessing delivered from the central balcony of the basilica.

At the Tuesday night Christmas service, Francis drew on the humility theme of his nine-month-old papacy as he cited Jesus' humble beginning as a poor and vulnerable baby. "You are immense, and you made yourself small; you are

rich, and you made yourself poor; you are all-powerful and you made yourself vulnerable," Francis said of Jesus as he delivered his homily in the basilica, packed with the faithful.

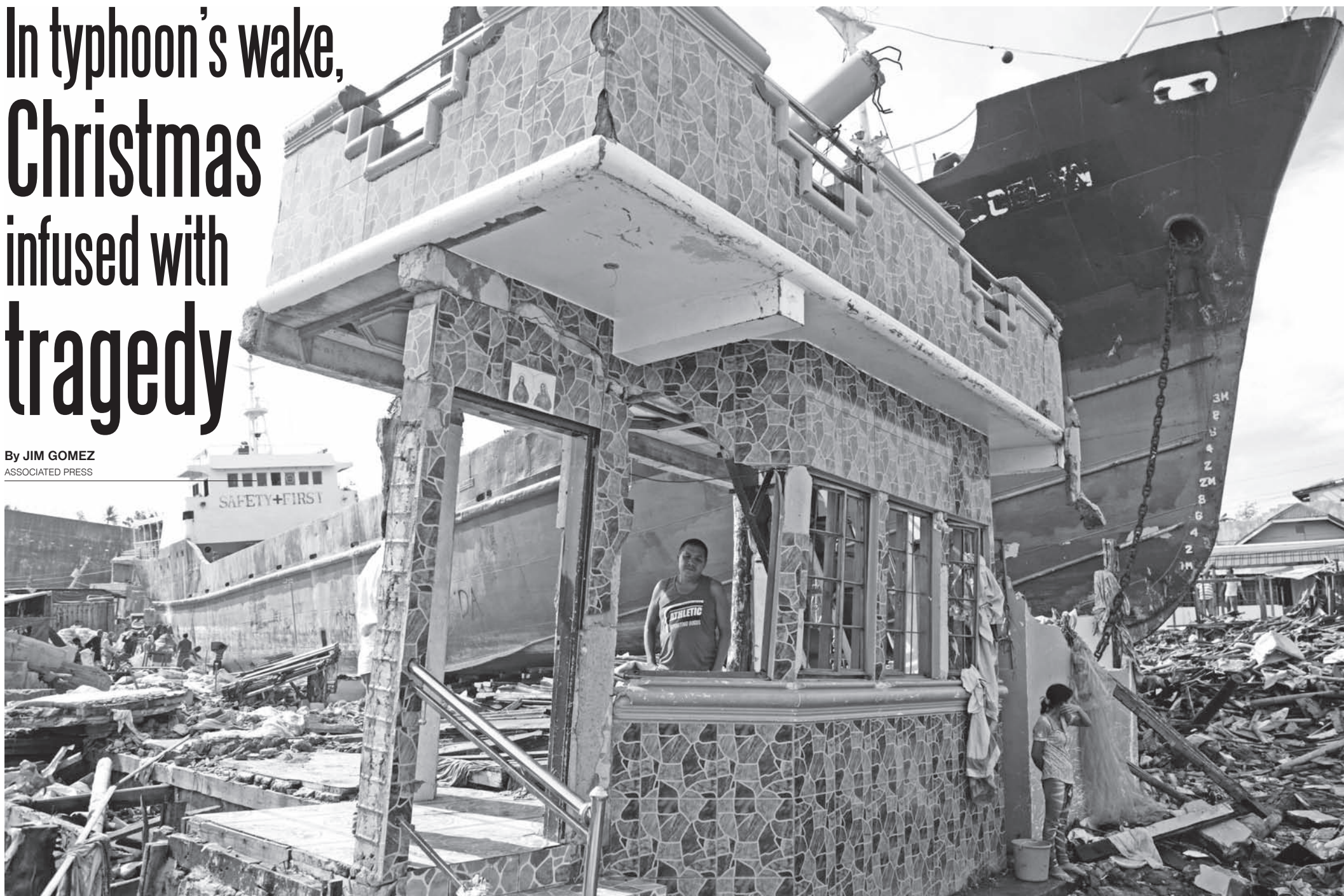
He noted that the first to receive news of Jesus' birth were shepherds, who in society were considered "among the last, the outcast."

The Argentine-born pope, who has also encouraged his flock to be a joyful church, called Jesus "the light who brightens the darkness."

Focus

In typhoon's wake, Christmas infused with tragedy

By JIM GOMEZ
ASSOCIATED PRESS



TACLOBAN, Philippines (AP)—Christmas lights blink in a handful of restaurants in Tacloban, but at nightfall, much of this city flattened by Typhoon Haiyan slips into darkness.

A few downtown shops have reopened. Roadside vendors peddle fruits of the season: oranges and red apples. There is rebuilding, though much of it consists of residents hammering shelters out of scavenged debris.

The Nov. 8 typhoon killed more than 6,100 people in the eastern Philippines, displaced at least 4 million others and left its most gruesome mark on Tacloban, a city of 240,000 that will need years to recover.

Soon after the storm, Philippine Energy Secretary Jericho Petilla promised to restore power by Christmas Eve or resign, and indeed, electricity has returned to nearly all of the more than 300 towns that lost it. But relatively few people are able to use it. Officials say many storm-ravaged houses and shops will spend the holidays in the dark because their wiring systems are damaged.

City Hall, a seaside hilltop complex surrounded by ruins, buzzes with typhoon relief work, with dozens of staffers and foreign aid workers busy on the phone or huddled in talks.

"I am hoping by a year you'll see some significant improvements," Mayor Alfred Romualdez says. But he's not sure when his city will fully bounce back.

Christmas Day Mass here will be celebrated by the papal envoy. There will be a Christmas Eve dinner for foreign aid workers and local officials.

But mostly, Christmas will be a celebration amid deprivation, in tents, makeshift homes and damaged churches. The smell of death remains in parts of the city. Thousands of people have simply left.

"Many of them, I know, prefer not to spend it here," Romualdez says. "Maybe a change of scenery first and then come back after the holidays."

Fire officer Rolando Unay gently lifts a black cadaver bag left on a roadside by villagers in Tacloban city. "It's a child," he tells his team of corpse collectors.

As their orange dump truck cruises along a main road adorned with Christmas trees, motorists and passers-by cover their noses.

More than six weeks after Typhoon Haiyan struck, leaving well over 2,000 people dead in Tacloban alone, this sad work continues. Soldiers, police, firefighters and volunteers have cleared what had been a heartbreaking landscape of bodies strewn across the ruined city, but the stench in scattered mounds of debris means there are more left to find.

Unay, a doting grandfather with five children, says that although the work is difficult he sees the good in it.

"Every time I lift a child's body, I could feel that the agony of a parent, a family somewhere, is about to end," he said Friday.

At a corner, a distraught fisherman, Hubert Labanan, waves at Unay's truck to stop. He points to the remains of his mother by the roadside. Villagers found

her remains under a pile of wood and other debris that they cleared while preparing to repair a house.

Holding back tears, Labanan tells Unay's crew that he had lost his own home in the storm and was too poor to bury his mother in a cemetery. He begged that she be taken to a mass grave.

As Unay's team left with his mother's remains, Labanan waved goodbye, then stood motionless until the orange truck vanished from his sight.

In early November, Eledio Moro thought he had Christmas figured out. He was going to surprise his 2-year-old daughter, Aubrey, with a pink toy motorbike. For his wife, a gold bracelet, or maybe an expensive Western-brand shirt.

He owned a restaurant and a money-lending business. His new house was one of the grandest in the poor coastal neighborhood. Last year, he draped it in the best and brightest Christmas lights.

"We worked hard and were doing well then suddenly, like a bubble that burst, I lost everything," he says.

Like many in Tacloban, Moro ignored an order from authorities to evacuate as Haiyan approached, thinking his house could withstand the storm.

He and his family were huddled by the staircase when a cargo ship, swept inland by the massive storm surge, smashed into the house, knocking them into the water.

He survived by grabbing a piece of bamboo. Now all that is left of his home is the staircase, a wall and a second-floor balcony beside the huge, steel-hulled ship, still stuck by the road.

Moro, 41, now lives with his sister. Sleeping tablets have helped him get through the worst of the past six weeks, he says.

On Christmas, he will visit the graves of his wife and his daughter, "to ask forgiveness for not having been able to save them."

Although its roof got blown off by Haiyan's wind and it became a burial ground for dozens of typhoon victims, the Roman Catholic cathedral in Palo, near Tacloban, hosted a festive event a day before Christmas: the mass wedding of 98 couples.

Originally scheduled for 147 couples on Nov. 16, the wedding was postponed when the monster storm struck, damaging the church's interior, breaking its stained glass windows and scattering its pews.

A smaller number registered for Tuesday's ceremony, apparently because the other couples left the region after the storm, said Monsignor Bernie Pantin, who officiated the wedding.

"I praised them for their strong faith whatever happens," Pantin said.

Workers draped the roof with tarpaulins ahead of Christmas but part of the altar still got wet from a downpour later Tuesday. Archbishop Giuseppe Pinto, the papal envoy to the Philippines, was to celebrate a Christmas Eve Mass at the damaged cathedral.

At night in Tacloban's dark and dreary downtown, Joseph Bonavitacola's restaurant is filled with chatter, mostly of

foreign and local aid workers. His brick oven hardly gets any rest.

Red Christmas lanterns, lights and decor adorn window panes and a brick wall at Giuseppe's, which has the ambience of fine dining in Manila, the Philippine capital.

It's hard to imagine how the Italian businessman, who has lived in the city for 20 years with his Filipino wife, reopened the place less than three weeks after Typhoon Haiyan devastated about 4,000 businesses. Only about 5 percent have reopened, officials say.

"The water was about this high," Bonavitacola says, pointing to the chest-high wooden cashier counter. "The bar was down. The chiller was by the door. The doors were broken. There was lots of mud. Everything was upside down."

Frightened by a jailbreak and looting, he left for Manila with his family but returned after three days to start a massive cleanup with 20 employees. He fixed damaged equipment and got supplies from another branch of his restaurant.

Despite a power outage, he reopened Nov. 24 with candlelit tables. His message, exclaimed on a big sign outside: Rise Tacloban.

He also owns 10 meat shops that were inundated, and has begun to reopen them, keeping prices at pre-typhoon levels.

Outside his crowded restaurant, armed policemen stand guard. Most nearby shops remain shut.

"We try to make it feel as normal as possible," says Bonavitacola's wife, Catheryn. "Because outside, it's still depressing."

Life & Style

Lawrence beats Cyrus, Netflix in AP's vote as top entertainer

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The battle for AP entertainer of the year came down to the Girl on Fire and the Queen of Twerk.

Jennifer Lawrence edged out Miley Cyrus by one vote in The Associated Press' annual survey of its newspaper and broadcast members and subscribers for Entertainer of the Year.

There were 70 ballots submitted by U.S. editors and news directors. Voters were asked to consider who had the most influence on entertainment and culture in 2013.

Lawrence won 15 votes. Cyrus had 14. Netflix was a close third, earning 13 votes for altering the TV landscape with its on-demand format and hit



In this Nov. 20, 2013 file photo, actress Jennifer Lawrence attends a special screening of "The Hunger Games: Catching Fire" at AMC Lincoln Square in New York.

original series.

But Lawrence—who started

the year with an Academy Award for best actress, fueled a box-office franchise as "The Hunger Games" heroine Katniss Everdeen, and wrapped 2013 with a critically acclaimed performance in "American Hustle" that just earned Golden Globe and Screen Actors Guild Award nominations—charmed fans everywhere with her candid sincerity.

She was also a fashion darling—a muse for Dior—who made headlines with her pixie haircut. ("That was the weirdest thing that ever happened to me," she recently told Jon Stewart.)

Lawrence declined comment for this story.

Q&A: Ben Stiller dreams of a shift with 'Mitty'

By **JAKE COYLE**
AP FILM WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—Ben Stiller's commonality with the hero of his new film hasn't gone unnoticed.

"The Secret Life of Walter Mitty," starring and directed by Stiller, is adapted from James Thurber's classic short story that first appeared in The New Yorker in 1939. Since then, Walter Mitty (a mild-mannered man who enlivens a mundane day with a series of fantasies) has been synonymous with daydreaming and flights of imagination.

Stiller, too, hopes for something a little different for his life: He wants to direct more movies and make films outside of the comedies he's best known for.

"The Secret Life of Walter Mitty," a kind of remake of the 1947 Danny Kaye version, is a big-budget, big-scale shift for the 48-year-old Stiller. It's his fifth time directing a movie (from "Reality Bites" to "Tropic Thunder"), but his first time helming a film that, while funny, isn't quite a comedy.

Having just wrapped shooting on another film with "Greenberg" director Noah Baumbach in Brooklyn, Stiller recently met with a reporter in New York to discuss his new trajectory.

AP: With "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" opening on a crowded Christmas for moviegoing, do you feel particular pressure?

Stiller: (Laughs.) Honestly, I think I feel the same thing that I feel every time a movie comes out—which is: It's a lot of pressure and, at same time, it's really, totally out of my hands.

AP: Are you comfortable at this point directing and acting at the same time?

Stiller: I don't think you ever get totally comfortable with it. You get into a rhythm with it. But I always feel like every time you start up, it's always figuring



Stiller

AP: That must be especially difficult when you're, as Mitty, floating in the middle of the North Atlantic Ocean.

Stiller: There was this moment where they dropped me in the water and the boat went away to get a POV shot coming back at me, and I was just totally alone in the water. It was that thing: Wow, this has gone beyond making a movie now. This is just me, the ocean.

AP: Were you aiming to be a director as early as "The Ben Stiller Show"? Many credit the 1992-93 sketch series as hugely influential to comedy since.

Stiller: It was always what excited me the most. We'd have a sketch that was a parody of a Scorsese movie or something like that, or something that all of sudden became its own little movie. I remember one sketch we did that was a restaurant where they were serving human beings. It was like a 'Soylent Green' sort of thing. We had been canceled and we knew we were canceled, and we were shooting our last episode. It was this 11-page sketch that was a little sort of horror movie. I remember having one of the best experiences on the show doing that one. It was like making a little movie.

AP: Do you ever wish you limited yourself more to directing?

Stiller: It's not something I think about in terms of: 'Oh, if I had just not been an actor, people would think of me as a director, or take me more seriously, or something like that.

it out. There's always that frustration that's going on where you're like: I just wish I could be behind the camera also.

AP: That must be especially difficult when you're, as Mitty, floating in the middle of the North Atlantic Ocean.

I've always enjoyed directing, and that's always been something that I've known in my head that that's where I see myself ending up, anyway.

AP: Even when you haven't directed, you've surrounded yourself with ensembles and been a strong voice in shaping the films.

Stiller: What I learned early on when I started being the main character in movies, I realized that there's a responsibility with that in terms of what the audience is going to see. An audience doesn't delineate who produced that, or who directed that. They're like, 'Oh, I'm going to go see Ben in a movie.' There's a responsibility that I felt I had, to varying levels of success (laughs) in that process—unless I was going into a world of a director, someone like Noah, where I felt, 'This guy had such a specific sensibility.' ... I feel like I learned from those experiences. I have a different approach going into movies now.

AP: How so?

Stiller: Sometimes I went against the grain more. Now, I wouldn't. At a certain point, you can push and push, and you don't get the result that you want and it doesn't help the person that's trying to make the movie. That, for me, has been the learning experience over the years.

AP: You've long aimed to make a movie of George Saunders' "CivilWarLand in Bad Decline." What are you interested in doing now?

Stiller: Just different kinds of movies that I'm not necessarily in. I think that opens up (laughs) the casting possibilities. I look forward to doing that, just something I feel passionate and connected to. I would love to do something that's not necessarily comedic. But I also don't want to go and do something that's ultra-dark and serious just to do that.

In Celebration of His New Life

†Joaquin Rufag Sablan

September 20, 1939 – December 19, 2013

In His New Life, He Now Joins His:

Wife: †Francisca Rogopes Sablan

Son: †Marvin R. Sablan

Parents: †Maria Malus Rufag & †Sylvestre Torres Sablan

Maternal Grandparents: †Fernando Rufag & †Maria Pierre Malus

Paternal Grandparents: †Joaquin San Nicolas Sablan & †Geronima Salas Torres

Parents In-Law: †Patricia Itibus Laniyo & †Jose Saralu Rogopes

Sisters & Brothers: †Jesus, †Ramon, †Fernando R. Sablan & †Consolacion S. Rasiang

Brother In-Law/Sister In-Law: †Sylvestre Rasiang & †Marietta Quimbao Laniyo

His memories will forever live in the hearts of his:

Wife: Yuefang Xing Sablan

Children: Elaine Marie Camacho (Azgar Chokider), Travis John Joaquin Jr. (Ana R. Hofschneider), Francine Marie (Joseph Naputi), John Joseph, Jocine Calyn Sylvestre (Ana Maria Limes) Marlene, Delvin James, Shyanne & Shantelle Ada

Brothers & Spouse: Vicente Rufag Sablan & Frances Manuel Rufag Sablan & Julie D

Sister In-Law & Brother In-Law: Ramona Rogopes Innocente & Simeon Jesus Manuel L. Laniyo

He is also survived by numerous nieces, nephews, grand nieces/nephews and god children

Daily mass of intention and rosary offered at San Jose Church. On December 24, Tuesday, rosary is 12pm. On December 25, mass offer for 9am and rosary 7:30pm. On December 26, mass is 6am and rosary 7:30pm.

Our beloved Father, Joaquin, will be escorted from Commonwealth Health Center Chapel at 7:30am to Mt. Carmel Cathedral for last respect. Responso and viewing will begin at 8am. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 11am followed immediately by the Interment at Chalan Kanoa Cemetery.

Your presence, thoughts and prayers are deeply appreciated.

Thank You - Ghillsow - Si Yu'us Ma'ase

From the Family

IN CELEBRATION OF HIS NEW LIFE

†Eduardo P. Pangilinan

August 26, 1947 – December 23, 2013

In his new life, he now joins his:

Parents: †Martin Nuqui Pangilinan Sr. & †Teresita David Pangilinan

Parents In-Law: †Rafael Masangcay & †Maria Masangcay

His memories will forever live in the hearts of his:

Wife: Mercedes Masangcay Pangilinan

Children and Grandchildren:

Edmer M. & Miriam D. Pangilinan (Justin Joshua, D. Pangilinan, Eva Christabel D. Pangilinan, Jamie Marie D. Pangilinan)

Everly M. & Lorena M. Pangilinan (Martin Angelo M. Pangilinan, Heather Angel M. Pangilinan)

Edward Michael M. & Suzanne T. Pangilinan (Edward Michael T. Pangilinan Jr., Sania Torres)

Princess P. & Jayson Palacios (Jayla P. Palacios, Jayce Javen P. Palacios)

Prince Martin Paul Pangilinan

Brothers, Sisters And In-Laws:

†Ernie P. Pangilinan

Alegria P. Tongol

Elizer P. & Lumie R. Pangilinan

Edwin P. & Perlita S. Pangilinan

Eden P. & Judy T. Pangilinan

†Martin P. Jr. & Chicako M. Pangilinan

Ener P. & Rosita M. Pangilinan

Alice P. & Rod Miranda

Agnes P. & Henry Sanchez

He will be missed by numerous nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, cousins, and friends.

Memorial Services will be held on Friday, December 27, 2013 at Assemblies of God Auditorium – Grace Christian Ministries. Viewing will be from 8:00A.M. – 8:45A.M. Memorial Services will begin at 9:00A.M. Interment Services will be at Santuario Pax Memorial Garden, Kagman at 10:30A.M. where he'll be at a peaceful rest.

Your Thoughts and Prayers are greatly appreciated.

Thank You Maraming Salamat Po

Mercedes (Mercy) Pangilinan, Children and Family

Marty and Leo team up again for 'Wolf'

By JAKE COYLE
AP FILM WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—“Anything goes” was the guiding ethos for Martin Scorsese and Leonardo DiCaprio in making their extravagant dark comedy of Wall Street excess, “The Wolf of Wall Street.”

“We would look at each other and ask, ‘Are we going too far?’” says DiCaprio. Rarely was the answer “yes.”

The two longtime collaborators pushed the based-on-a-true-story tale to the limits of outrageousness, decency and MPAA approval. With pinstripe suits instead of togas, it’s their “Satyricon,” their “Caligula”: a nearly three-hour-long orgy of money, sex and drugs.

The partnership between the 71-year-old Scorsese and DiCaprio, 39, has now stretched over five films and more than a dozen years. They’ve together been able to carve out a space for the kind of daring Hollywood typically shuns. “Anything goes” is far from the mantra of today’s movie business.

“I don’t think people really quite understand how unique this movie is,” says DiCaprio, while Scorsese, sitting next to him, nods. “No matter what they think of the movie, you do not see films like this happening.”

Scorsese and DiCaprio recently sat down for a joint interview to discuss their latest film, which opens on Christmas Day. On the surface, they exude the dynamic of master and pupil. But they’re on more equal footing, bonded by a desire to make movies like those from the ‘70s that DiCaprio grew up admiring and Scorsese actually made. In the last 13 years, Scorsese has made only one fictional film (“Hugo”) that didn’t star DiCaprio.

“Over the years, it’s been about learning more, fine-tuning the instruments together, so to speak, and discovering more from each other in the process,” says Scorsese. They co-produced “The Wolf of Wall Street,” which Warner Bros. turned down in 2008 before it was reborn with Paramount Pictures.

Ironically, Scorsese was tipped off to DiCaprio’s talent from the actor he’s most associated with: Robert De Niro. After De Niro made 1993’s “This Boy’s Life,” he recommended an 18-year-old DiCaprio to Scorsese. That would spark a pairing that has grown to rival De Niro’s own



This Dec. 15, 2013 photo shows American actor Leonardo DiCaprio, left, with American film director Martin Scorsese in New York.

with Scorsese (eight films).

DiCaprio was in his mid-20s when he sought out a part in Scorsese’s bloody New York tale, “Gangs of New York.” The Howard Hughes biopic, “The Aviator,” followed, a movie that DiCaprio (who landed his first lead actor Oscar nomination) suggested to Scorsese. Then came the Boston crime flick “The Departed” (earning Scorsese his first directing Academy Award) and the ‘50s noir “Shutter Island.”

“It hasn’t been calculated at all,” says DiCaprio. “I brought projects to him. Projects have come to us. And we just kind of both said, ‘Yes, that’s the type of movie we want to do.’ It’s been this really natural progression. We’ve taken more and more chances. And, certainly I’ve grown more as an actor having a trusted ally.”

“The Wolf of Wall Street,” written by Terence Winter (“Boardwalk Empire”), is adapted from Jordan Belfort’s memoir about his heady rise from a Long Island penny stock trader to a wealthy stock swindler presiding over the brokerage firm Stratton Oakmont.

Schooled by an early boss (Matthew McConaughey) on the “fairy dust” that is high finance, Belfort recklessly plunders his clients’ pockets to make himself rich and to finance a parade of prostitutes, cocaine and Quaaludes. DiCaprio calls the movie “a biography of a scumbag.”

“It has to be seen. It has to be experienced,” says Scorsese. “If it raises the ire of some

people, that might be a good thing because it makes you think about it.”

Though DiCaprio has spent much of his post-“Titanic” career taking on iconic, somewhat stiff roles like J. Edgar Hoover, Jay Gatsby and Howard Hughes, his performance as Belfort is wildly uninhibited—more like he was in Woody Allen’s “Celebrity.” In scenes in front of hundreds of cheering extras playing sycophant employees, DiCaprio identified with Belfort’s swelling ego. He felt, he says, “like a rock star.”

“Jordan’s character had been brewing in me for a while,” says DiCaprio. “I had been thinking about this for six years, so I knew something was going to come out. Some beast was going to come out. I just didn’t know what it was going to be.”

“He was enjoying himself with the character,” says Scorsese. “I didn’t want to stand back and say, ‘This is bad behavior.’ It’s not for us to say, it’s for us to present. And obviously it’s bad behavior.”

The arc of the movie will recall for many Scorsese’s “Goodfellas.” It could be that Scorsese identifies with the voracious appetites of Belfort and Henry Hill because he shares it, only his taste is for movies. He paraphrases Frank Capra: “Film is a disease and the only antidote is more film.”

Though Scorsese remains an unusually prolific filmmaker, he signals an acceptance that his time is waning: “Who knows? You may have a couple of minutes left. You

may have 20 years left.

“I want to do so much, and when you get to this vantage point, there’s not much time left.”

Scorsese compares new films to a diet of Big Macs being served to young people like his teenage daughter. “It’s not cinema anymore,” he says. “It’s a blockbuster.”

“What’s their idea of what cinema is? A film that opens on a weekend and the money it makes on a Friday night,” he says. “The only way that can really be changed is if the audience changes. But how can you change the audience now because they’ve been raised on it? A young person won’t take it as seriously, maybe.”

For now, he and DiCaprio (their career together will be honored by the National Board of Review) hope to work together again, continuing to evade industry pressures as a duo. Says the Los Angeles-native DiCaprio: “I’ve been given an opportunity to finance movies based on my name and what am I going to do with that? ... It’s an opportunity that I’d feel like an idiot to squander.”

Unlike the business of Wall Street, the results aren’t “fairy dust.”

“Good, bad or indifferent, we’re trying to make something so we can sit here and talk about it,” says Scorsese. “If you’re taking money from here and here and nothing comes out, what is it for? What are you creating?”

CHART TOPPERS

The top 10 songs and albums on the iTunes Store for the week ending Dec. 23, 2013:

TOP SONGS

1. “Timber (feat. Ke\$ha)”, Pitbull
2. “Say Something”, Christina Aguilera, A Great Big World
3. “The Monster (feat. Rihanna)”, Eminem
4. “Counting Stars”, OneRepublic
5. “Let Her Go”, Passenger
6. “Dark Horse (feat. Juicy J)”, Katy Perry
7. “Story of My Life”, One Direction
8. “Royals”, Lorde
9. “Demons”, Imagine Dragons
10. “Burn”, Ellie Goulding

TOP ALBUMS

1. “BEYONCÉ”, Beyoncé
2. “Pure Heroine”, Lorde
3. “PTXmas”, Pentatonix
4. “Frozen”, Various Artists
5. “The Marshall Mathers LP2”, Eminem
6. “Somewhere Somehow”, We The Kings
7. “The 20/20 Experience - 2 of 2”, Justin Timberlake
8. “Christmas”, Michael Bublé
9. “Wrapped In Red”, Kelly Clarkson
10. “Because the Internet”, Childish Gambino

Mom’s promises to kick drug habit are only empty words

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: I am a 15-year-old girl and a caring person. I’m worried about my mother. She has been an addict for nine years. She always says she wants help, but she never follows through with getting the help she needs. I have asked her many times to go and get help, and have told her how bad her using makes me feel.

What do you think I can do to encourage her to follow through with treatment? I miss my mother. Any advice would be appreciated.

IN NEED OF HELP IN OLYMPIA, WASH.

DEAR IN NEED OF HELP: You are not only a caring young woman, you are also mature for your age and intelligent. If your mother has been an addict since you were 6, your entire childhood has been spent taking care of her and raising yourself. I am truly sorry for that.

Because nothing you say gets through to her, consider moving in with another relative if that’s possible. You should also join a Narateen support group. It’s a 12-step program for teenage friends and family members of addicts. There is one in your city called “Hope for Today.” To find the location, check the Nar-Anon website, www.nar-anon.org.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I am a grandmother, a former teacher and I have my master’s in child psychology. I was also a school board member. I love children.

Please pass this along to parents and anyone else who cares for children: Quit force-feeding them! Again and again I see parents beg and coerce their kids to eat. There are too many obese people in the world. Kids will eat when they are hungry. Just don’t give them any junk in between.

I know a dad who told me he forced his son to finish his food until the son went and threw up. He said he will never do that again. Remember, children have small stomachs. They don’t need to eat much to feel full. Restaurants serve too much.

Let kids eat when they need to. Just give them healthy choices.

DIANE IN MILWAUKEE

DEAR DIANE: Unfortunately, babies don’t come with written instructions. Many parents “encourage” their children to eat because they’re afraid if they don’t they’re not doing their job. It’s a reflection of their anxiety. Too often, mealtime turns into a power struggle, which is a big mistake.

What you have written is common sense. A pediatrician or health clinic can advise parents what and how much their child should eat. And I agree, restaurant portions are usually larger than customers should consume in one meal, which is why those who are watching their calories are advised to cut the portions in half before eating.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I am a grown woman with a wonderful husband, two jobs and five beautiful children. I am a good person. My parents raised me to be respectful and accepting of all kinds of people.

My arms are partially tattooed with beautiful flowers. Family members openly express their dislike of it. They have a right to their thoughts and to say what they please. What can I say back that tells them how rude they are and how they hurt me?

INKED AND IRKED IN POCATELLO, IDAHO

DEAR INKED AND IRKED: You should say, “When you gave your opinion about my arms, I heard you the first time. For you to keep repeating it is insulting and hurtful, so please cut it out. I think my tattoos are beautiful and THAT’S what’s important.” And if your family members persist in making cruel comments, you have my permission to end the conversation.

■■■

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

‘Fast & Furious 7’ delayed until April 2015

NEW YORK (AP)—Universal Pictures has delayed the release of “Fast & Furious 7” for almost a year following the death of star Paul Walker.

The studio announced Monday that the “Fast & Furious” sequel will be released in April 2015, instead of July. Shooting

on the film was about halfway finished when the 40-year-old Walker died in a car crash outside of Los Angeles.

Walker will still appear in the film, though Universal has not said exactly how it will handle his unfinished performance.

Co-star Vin Diesel first post-

ed the news on Facebook, telling his fans that, “He’d want you to know first.”

The franchise has been one of Universal’s most lucrative, grossing almost \$2.4 billion worldwide since 2001. The last film, “Fast & Furious 6,” made \$789 million.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



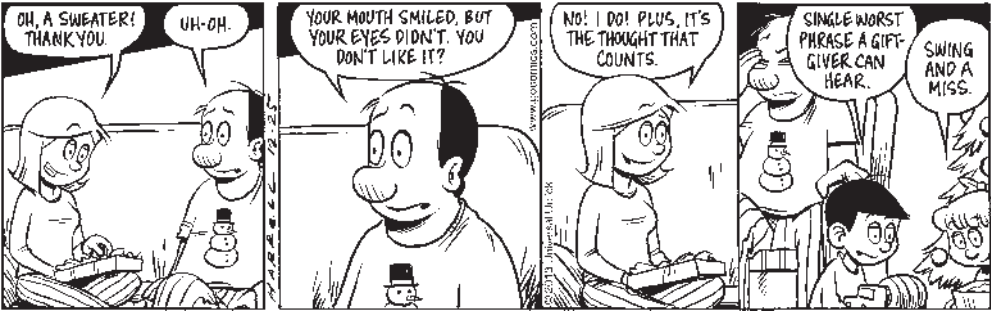
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Cold War projectile (Abbr.)

5 Thanks-giving veggie

8 Chooses, with "for"

12 Extra

13 Before

14 Teeny insect

15 Green banana

17 Sharp tooth

18 Biological bristles

19 Kam-pala's country

21 Dogpatch creator

24 Wapiti

25 Bit of mockery

28 Verve

30 Slight amount

33 Lubricate

34 Wood-shaving tool

35 Have bills

36 Under-wear with underwire

37 Nevada city

38 Recognized

DOWN

1 Little demons

2 Either "Unforgettable" singer

3 4-Down, in the eyes of many

4 Dennis Mitchell, e.g.

5 Verily

6 "Entourage" role

7 Carte

8 Butcher's scraps

9 Krill, for instance

10 Take care of

11 Long story

16 Afternoon social

17 Kelly or Wilder

18 Russian river or range

22 One-name soccer legend

23 Texas city

25 Profession

26 Atmosphere

27 Metal disk to be made into a coin

29 Unsigned (Abbr.)

31 Shock partner

32 Morning moisture

34 Get ready (for)

38 Chess piece

40 Deserves

42 — Arbor, MI

43 Unclothed

45 Skewer

47 Cherished

48 Loosen

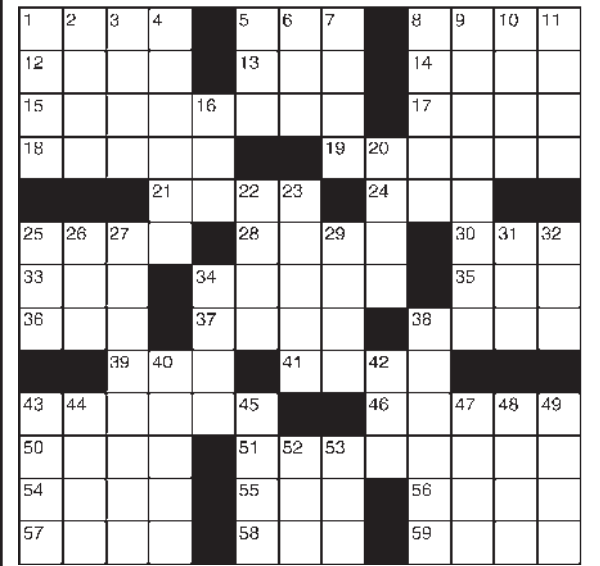
49 Pronto, in the ER

52 Falsehood

53 Succor

Solution time: 21 mins.

Tuesday's answer 12-26



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-800-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Beth Behrs, 28; Chris Daughtry, 34; Jared Leto, 42; David Sedaris, 57.

Happy Birthday: Expect and be prepared to face opposition. Do your best to ferret out information required to back your decisions. Don't fold under pressure or expect anything from anyone. Go it alone, strive to reach your goals and victory will be yours to enjoy. Proving what you can do by offsetting whatever you come up against will lead to deserved opportunities. Your numbers are 4, 9, 16, 28, 33, 37, 40.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Quiet time, relaxing and enjoying the comfort of your own company or that of someone who makes you feel secure and balanced should be your plan. It's a difficult time of the year and emotions and anxiety will be hard to control. ***

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Socializing will be a blast from your past when people you haven't seen for a long time engage in a walk down memory lane. Enjoy the time spent with old friends. You'll discover that you have more options than you realized. ***

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Don't feel pressured or obligated to help others. You need to spend some down time taking care of your needs. Reorganize and reconsider your current position and what's required of you to bring greater joy and stability to your life. *****

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Head to an unusual destination. The journey you take today, whether it is physical, emotional, mental, spiritual or otherwise, will lead to an interesting beginning and an opening that will bring greater stability to your life and partnerships. **

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Do something exhilarating or travel about visiting and sharing ideas and plans with friends. Be cautious if the weather or other conditions prevail that could lead to injury. Talks can be made via Skype just as easily as in person. ****

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Pampering, relaxing or just spending time with someone special should highlight your day. You don't have to spend a lot to have a good time or take chances in order to impress someone special. Good planning is all that's required. ***

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Adjust to change. Don't make a fuss or take on too much. Keep life simple by accepting the inevitable. Coasting along will be your best bet. Curl up with a good book or do something that you find relaxing. ***

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Interacting with others will be exciting but also lead to some controversial topics. Offering to help others is fine, but don't take on responsibilities that don't belong to you. Offer suggestions, nothing more. Put love as a top priority. ***

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Spend time preparing for the new year. Get your house in order and your plans for the future in place. Make the changes at home and to your position that will allow you to live life your way. *****

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Tuesday's SUDOKU Answer

3	4	8	2	9	5	6	1	7
9	7	5	1	8	6	4	2	3
6	1	2	7	4	3	8	5	9
1	5	7	6	3	4	2	9	8
8	2	3	9	5	1	7	6	4
4	6	9	8	2	7	5	3	1
5	3	6	4	1	8	9	7	2
7	9	4	3	6	2	1	8	5
2	8	1	5	7	9	3	4	6

Difficulty Level ★★★ 12/25

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EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Be careful while traveling or discussing any information with authority figures or those from different backgrounds. Say less and it will spare you the grief of a sudden change of plans due to a misunderstanding. Act responsibly and compassionately. **

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Take a close look at your financial situation. You may have to make some budget cuts in order to head into the new year without feeling a financial pinch. Collect any outstanding debts or consider ways to consolidate what you owe. *****

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): A partnership change may take you by surprise. Listen to complaints and make a decision that will lead to a better future. Let go of a situation that isn't good. Forward thinking will lead to victory. ***

Birthday Baby: You are determined and industrious. You like to be in control.

Eugenia's website—eugenialast.com, Eugenia's android app @ <http://bit.ly/exhoro> and join Eugenia on [twitter/facebook/linkedin](http://twitter.com/eugenialast).

WONDERWORD By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

MERRY CHRISTMAS! Solution: 8 letters

T B S S E V L E D I T E L U Y
E F E N U N W R A P E A C E A
E A I L E A S E T A R O C E D
R I K G L P L G O O D Y E S I
T T O O I S O C H N R T S G L
S H O L O N U U S A W N N N O
O S C D G S G A M R F E E I H
H A D G L S T E L E M V C K T
P W E E S Y H N R C T D N C A
E I D U R E S Y E B A A I O E
S S S R L Y L U L M R A I K T R
O E E H O L L Y B I A E N S W
J M T T L R E G N A M N A A I
R E I N D E E R A T S A R D S
B N A T I V I T Y D O O F O H

© 2013 Universal Uclick www.wonderword.com Join us on Facebook 12/25
Advent, Bells, Bethlehem, Busy, Cookies, Decorate, Eggnog, Elves, Faith, Family, Food, Frankincense, Gift, Gingerbread, Gold, Good, Holiday, Holly, Host, Hugs, Jesus, Joseph, Manger, Mary, Merry, Mrs. Claus, Nativity, Open, Ornaments, Peace, Reds, Reindeer, Santa Claus, Skate, Sled, Star, Stockings, Toys, Tree, Unwrap, Wisemen, Wish, Wreath, Yuletide.
Last Tuesday's Answer: Iron Out
Treasury 12, 13, 14 or 15 can be purchased by calling toll-free, 1-800-642-6480.
Order online at wonderword.universalclick.com. (Contains 130 puzzles.)

CLASSIFIED ADS



WHATZIT Solution: Down in the dumps

CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune’s Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED LINER ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 5-day run in both print and online editions, for as low as \$30 for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of the packages below.

ADS	(PRINT)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	\$15	\$30
• 5-Liner	\$24	\$45

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the Saipan Tribune are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

www.facebook.com/dingbatsgames

HEALTH PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION

Job Vacancy Announcement

(02) REGISTERED NURSE

- Must pass NCLEX.
- Certification in Basic Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation.
- English Language skills-proficient in spoken, written and comprehension.
- At least two to three years in experience.
- Must hold a degree of Bachelors of Science in nursing.
- Must be flexible with time schedule.

Interested applicants must submit resume or pick up application at Saipan Health Clinic in Chalan Kiya, Saipan. Deadline to submit an application will be on December 31, 2013 by 4:00p.m.

For more information, please call Judy Arriola at (670) 234-2901 ext. 124

St. Jude Renal Care Facility, Inc.

Job Vacancy Announcement

(06) Hemodialysis Technician

- Certificate from a Junior College/Technical School in healthcare.
- Attended a hemodialysis-training program.
- Three year hemodialysis experienced-preferred.
- Must be CCHT certified by the Nephrology Nursing Certification Commission.
- English Language skills-proficient in spoken, written, and comprehension
- Certification in Basic Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
- In-Service train with Baxter Phoenix Machine
- Experience with Ameriwater Bicarbonate distribution system
- Flexible with time schedule.

(01) Licensed Practical Nurse

- Must pass NCLEX-LPN and current CNMI LPN License
- Attended a hemodialysis training program
- One to four years hemodialysis experience or related field
- English Language skills-proficient in spoken, written, and comprehension.
- Certification in Basic Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
- In-service train with Baxter Phoenix Machine.
- Experience with Ameriwater Bicarbonate Distribution System

Interested applicants must submit resume or pick up application at St. Jude Renal Care Facility Inc., in Chalan Kiya, Saipan. Deadline to submit application will be on Tuesday, December 31, 2013 by 4:00p.m. For more information, please call Judy Arriola at (670) 234-2905 ext. 124

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Century Tours, Inc. is inviting qualified candidates to fill the following positions:

Operations Clerk (03)

Job Duties: Plan, create, arrange and operate tour and travel programs. Responsible for organizing and preparing tour itineraries to make sure meeting visitors requirements. Provide and organize vacation and holidays packages by coordinating and negotiating with airlines, hotels, ground transportation services, tour guides and sightseeing providers, restaurants and other similar businesses, as per contact and agreed customer service levels. Develop and maintain smooth working relationship with customers and business partners both in China and domestic. Provide advice on sightseeing and shopping activities, report any problems to related supervisor/manager, and solve problems with accommodations, itineraries or service, etc. Perform related administrative tasks such as processing paperwork and maintaining files and working comfortably both independently and within a team. Assist the Department Manager in achieving his/her objectives. Input and update of bookings records. Other duties as assigned.

Requirements: Minimum of 1 year of operation experience. High school education minimum. Good command of English and Chinese. Good computer skills and familiar with internet applications. Good writing and communication skills. Focus on details and thoroughness. Able to work with a team & under pressure. English and Chinese speaker preferred.

Applications may be obtained at the Century Tours, Inc. Office at the Kanoa Resort, Ground Floor located on Beach Road in Susupe, Saipan while resumes may be emailed at camille.orallo@saipan.travel. All resumes and applications must be submitted to the Human Resources Department at the Century Tours, Inc. Front Office no later than Thursday, December 26, 2013. Incomplete or late applications will not be accepted. Background checks and pre-employment drug testing may be required prior to employment.

*We are an Equal Employment Employer.
Women, minorities and disabled persons are encouraged to apply.*

EMPLOYMENT

(1) Beautician. Salary \$5.55/hr. 1 year experience. Call 433-2706 Salon De Tinian.

(1) Farmer. Salary \$5.55. Minimum of 2 years experience. Call 433-5333, Island Garden.

Warehouse for RENT

REM GUALO RAI
Warehouse #3 - Size: 4,000sq/ft
\$0.65 per sq/ft. Negotiable

REM LOWERBASE
Warehouse #4 - Size: 9,000sq/ft
Warehouse #2 - Size: 6,000sq/ft
\$0.45 per sq/ft. Negotiable

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CALL
235-6527/28 or 285-1317

EMPLOYMENT

(1) Cook. Salary \$5.55. Minimum of 2 years experience. Call 433-5333, Island Garden.

(1) Restaurant Supervisor. Salary \$5.55. Minimum of 2 years experience. Call 433-5333, Island Garden.

(2) Janitor and Cleaner, (8) Household Worker, (2) Maintenance and Repair Worker, \$5.55/hr, send resume to MTO Maintenance (Saipan), Inc. P.O. Box 504053, Saipan MP 96950.

APARTMENTS FOR RENT

Realty Management Services

Fina Sisu Terraces
Small 1-BR, 1-BTH. Unit approximately 284 sq.ft. **\$250/month.**
2-BR, 1-BTH. **\$350-\$550/month.** Close to NMC campus. MIHA applicants accepted.

Ocean View Terraces
(Navy Hill)
Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apt with private balcony & beautiful view.
\$600/month

Sunset View Terraces
(Navy Hill)
Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apt with private balcony & beautiful view.
\$550/month

LNH Apartments
(Lower Navy Hill)
Small 3BR & 2BTH. Unit approximately 600 sq.ft. EPA Solar Water Heater.
\$350-\$450/month

FEATURES:

- Fully Furnished
- Back-up Generator
- Air-conditioning in all rooms
- FREE WiFi
- Laundry Area
- Nighttime Security
- Ample Parking
- 24hr water

Please visit our website at www.saipan-properties.com
Call for an appointment
235-6527/8 or 285-1317.

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

WINCHELL'S DONUTS

1 vacancy for **Operations Manager**. Wage per hour depends on qualifications. Must be college level with at least 5 years of continued experience in managing a bakery or similar operations; must be capable of managing 15 or more people and more than one store; must be computer literate and possesses knowledge in operating cash register or POS system; must have an experience in handling the administrative and financial aspect of a business. Capability of conversing in basic Japanese or other foreign languages is highly preferred.

1 vacancy for **Store Manager**. Wage per hour depends on qualifications. Must be college level and has at least 2 years of continued experience in managing bakery operations; must have knowledge in operating cash register or POS system; must be customer-service oriented, computer literate and confident in doing basic mathematical skills. Capability of conversing in basic Japanese or other foreign languages is highly preferred.

4 vacancies for **Donut Makers/Bakers**. Wage ranges from \$5.55/hr to \$5.70/hr. Must be a high school graduate with an equivalent of at least 4 years experience in baking; must be able to read, write and speak basic English; must be capable of lifting at least 50lbs and has basic mathematical skills and knowledge in operating a cash register or POS system. Capability of conversing in basic Japanese and other foreign languages is highly preferred.

Additional requirements: All applicants must be of good health with good moral character. Must be able to follow grooming standards; provide current police/court clearance and health certificate. Must have reliable transportation and must undergo a drug test.

Applications may be obtained and submitted at Winchell's Garapan from 8am to 12pm or email them at dennys@guam.net

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

JVA# 2-2013-12

Candidates are to have the following minimum qualifications:

- Associate's degree from an accredited college in secretarial, business, accounting or related field, or an equivalent additional two years of secretarial experience Three years of progressive accounting experience preferably in cost accounting;
- Six (6) years of progressively responsible administrative or secretarial experience

Candidates must be able to demonstrate successful accomplishments in the following areas:

- provide personal and confidential services to relieve Managing Director, CNMI (MD) and Executive Director, Customer Operations (EDCO) of routine tasks and to assist in the research and draft-completion of more sophisticated tasks from them and other executive directors and senior managers;
- maintain the calendars of the MD and EDCO, schedule appointments, arrange travel and perform other administrative and secretarial duties, using initiative and analytical processes to resolve routine administrative problems, answer questions and correspondence, and minimize disruptions to their schedules

Applicants must apply online at www.ite.net under careers by December 27, 2013.

Life in Motion

**As an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer, we afford equal opportunity to all applicants and employees for hire and promotion without regard to race, color, origin, gender, age, marital status, religion, veteran status, or disability
We are also a Drug Free Workplace.**

Job Vacancy Announcement

Creel Technician/Biologist – Rota

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), in conjunction with the CNMI Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW), will be initiating a pilot fisherman creel survey on the island of Rota, CNMI. The survey will consist of interviewing fisherman to obtain fishing effort data and identifying and measuring catch from both shore- and boat-based fishing activities.

NOAA and DFW are seeking motivated individuals who can identify reef fish and pelagic fish species, who can work and communicate effectively with local fishermen, who have an understanding of the Rota fishing communities and who can work nights and/or weekends as scheduled.

Potential candidates will have to have a valid business license, CNMI driver's license and dependable vehicle prior to the award of the contract.

For more information please contact Steve McKagan at (670) 234-0004 or at steven.mckagan@noaa.gov.

Subscribe to the CNMI's First Daily Newspaper

Call 235-NEWS

Name: Rizalina Maratita
P.O. Box 505309
Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone No.: 483-9213

PRO SE

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT
OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN
MARIANA ISLANDS

IN RE THE MATTER OF THE)
APPOINTMENT OF)
AS)
GUARDIAN OF THE ESTATE OF:)
BLESILDA GRACE MARAITTA)
Child's Name (d.o.b))
Minor Child)
By)
Rizalina G. Maratita)
Petitioner)

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a Petition for Appointment of Guardian for the estate of the above-named minor child by RIZALINA G. MARAITTA, Petitioner, was filed with the above-entitled Honorable Court.

A HEARING of said petition for Guardianship will held at the above-entitled Honorable Court at Superior Court before the Associate Judge Govendo on the 9th day of January, 2014 at 10:30 AM or as soon as thereafter.

Patrick V. Diaz
Clerk of Court
/s/
Deputy Clerk of Court

WESTERN SALES TRADING COMPANY
has an opening for:

One (1) Sales Representative
Minimum qualifications: Associates degree (may be foreign and/or educational equivalent).
Duties: Sells company's merchandise to retail stores and outlets. Meets with customers in order to explain and promote the quality and competitive costing of the company's products. Quotes prices and credit terms for purchase of company's products. Prepares sales slips or sales contracts and may collect payment from customers. Ensures that customers' orders are properly filled. Arranges for delivery of products to customers.

One (1) Building Maintenance Repairer
Minimum Qualifications: Two years experience as building maintenance repairer.
Duties: Repairs and maintains the building structures and equipment of the company's commercial and industrial premises , including such duties as pipe fitting, insulating, welding, machining, carpentry; repairing electrical and mechanical equipment; installing, aligning, and balancing new equipment; and repairing buildings. Performs routine preventive maintenance to ensure that machines continue to run smoothly, building systems operate efficiently, or the physical condition of building does not deteriorate. Inspects, operates, or test machinery or equipment to diagnose machine malfunctions. Assembles, install, or repairs wiring, electrical or electronic components, pipe system, plumbing, machinery, or equipment. Repairs or replaces defective equipment parts, using hand tools and power tools, and reassembles equipment. Records type and cost of maintenance or repair work.

If interested, send resume to Western Sales Trading Company by email to wstcospan@pticom.com or by fax at 670-322-9408. Proof of qualifications and police clearance required within three days of hire.

American K&W Corporation
PMB 978 BOX 10001 Saipan, MP 96950
Job Vacancy Announcement
5 - Masseuse
Salary \$5.55 p/h. High School graduate. Minimum 5 years experience. Knowledge in Chinese and Japanese languages a plus.

If interested, email thomastchong@gmail.com

Job Vacancy Announcement

(1) **Maintenance Technician** — Minimum 3 years work related experience. Preferably knows how to speak Chinese. Flexible working hours. Rate \$5.55/hr.

(2) **Cook** — Specialized in Chinese food.

(2) **Waitress**

All applicants should have a minimum 3 years work related experience. Must be able to consistently demonstrate good customer service, preferably knows how to speak and read Chinese and Japanese. Flexible working hours. Rate \$5.55/hr. Please mail resume with job references to PMB 373 Box 10003, Saipan, MP 96950. New Star International Corporation dba Mura Ichiban Restaurant

Fiesta Inc. is currently seeking

(1) Commercial Cleaner

Interested applicants must email a resume to hrd3@joeten.com

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Clinical Embryologist
Must have 2 years lab experience, plus experience in clinical embryology.
Salary Negotiable.
Call Karen at 322-0419

Job Vacancy Announcement
(1) Store Manager – min.5 yrs work related exp., must speak, write & read Chinese & Japanese. Flexible working hrs, \$5.55 - \$6.00/hr.
(1) Accountant – Must have a Bachelor's degree in Accounting with min. 5 yrs exp, Proficient in MS Word, Excel, MYOB / AccountEdge Premium Accounting Software, Effective oral & written communication skills. \$5.55 - \$7.50/hr

Applicants should mail their resume with job reference to PMB 1118 Box 10003, Saipan, MP 96950. American Saipan Best Corporation dba Saipan Best Shopping Market

Tinian Prospect Company

is seeking qualified candidates for the following positions for construction project on Tinian.

(2)	Project manager	\$10.00/hr.	(3 years experience)
(10)	Project engineer	\$6.50/hr.	(2 years experience)
(3)	Accountant	\$6.00/hr.	(2 years experience)
(165)	Construction Workers	\$5.55/hr.	(2 years experience)
(20)	Equipment Operator	\$5.55/hr.	(2 years experience)

Interested applicants may send their resume to bmchen8@yahoo.com masseuse

Deadline to submit application will be end on January 15, 2014

Mobil Oil Mariana Islands Inc. (Mobil) is a subsidiary of Exxon Mobil Corporation – the world's largest publicly traded integrated petroleum and natural gas company which operates facilities and markets products globally and explores for oil and natural gas on six continents. This is your opportunity to join this dynamic company and become part of the team that thrives in a fast-paced, controls-oriented environment as:

TERMINAL OPERATOR, SAIPAN AND TINIAN

Job Description:
Perform day to day activities to safely operate a petroleum distribution facility. Maintaining safety, health, environmental and security standards pursuant to local and federal regulations and Mobil policies, procedures and guidelines while performing operations of marine tanker receiving, bunkering, tank truck loading, pipeline transfer, product quality testing, handling and storage of bulk and packaged petroleum products delivering premier product quality and customer service.

Location:
• Saipan Terminal, Puerto Rico, Northern Mariana Islands
• Tinian Bulk Plant, San Jose, Northern Mariana Islands

Primary Job Functions:
• Execute and comply with Mobil's operational procedures and systems, policies, guidelines, using terminal manuals & procedures, loss prevention tools, corporate and industry standards.
• Conduct routine facility inspections. Maintain housekeeping, conduct maintenance and repairs to ensure safe operating conditions. Administratively record and report conditions using Mobil's processes and systems. Apply basic computer programs such as Microsoft Word & Microsoft Excel
• Perform safe marine terminal operations: shore to ship and ship to shore transfers of bulk petroleum products; tank truck loading, pipeline transfers and product quality testing.
• Adhere to programs and take a dynamic and proactive approach to ensure the safety, health, environment and security of its employees, customers and the public.
• Administratively prepare & submit various regulatory agency & corporate reports, associated with the handling, storage and product movement of petroleum distribution terminal.
• Perform Oil loss monitoring duties.
• Interface with third party contractors, local and federal government agencies, internal and external customers, and Mobil global network system.
• Conduct simple math calculations and conversions of temperature, weights and measures.

Qualifications:
• Experience in safe petroleum handling, distribution and storage or related field.
• Must be familiar with computer applications in spreadsheet, word processing.
• Understanding of Federal and Local regulations as they apply to petroleum handling, storage, and distribution.
• Must be able to work shifts based on a 24-hour work day, work extended hours, weekends and holidays.
• Good Interpersonal skills.
• Ability to communicate orally and in writing in English.

Preference will be given to candidates with the following skills:
• Experience in marine terminal operations.
• Previous experience in petroleum handling and storage.
• Previous experience in Petroleum Industry.

If you are interested in and meet the qualifications for this position, please submit your resume on or before December 30, 2013.


Attention:
Maria Kemp, Field Operations Manager-CNMI
642 East Marine Corps Drive, Hagatna, Guam 96910
(Fax) 670 236-8190
Email: maria.kemp@exxonmobil.com

ExxonMobil is an Equal Opportunity Employer

Federal law requires that we verify the identity and work eligibility of all new hires. We comply with this law on a nondiscriminatory basis.

Mobil

We're drivers too.

**COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY**
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950
Phone: (670) 237-6500 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT # 03-2013

Opening date: December 17, 2013 Closing date: January 3, 2014

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) announces the following job vacancy:

Position: (1) Accountant-I (Saipan)
(1) AOA Controller/Ground Maintenance-I (Tinian)
(1) Vessel Traffic Controller-I (Port of Saipan)

Employment Application must be accompanied with a copy of all required diploma/certificates and/or official transcripts, original copy of recent police record not more than six (6) months old, original copy of U.S. Department of Defense Form DD214 for retired members or veterans of our Armed Forces, and other documents as required for the position. Public Law 11-70 requires that all male applicants age 18 to 25 years old must submit documentation evidencing his registration with the Federal Selective Service System. All applications and required documents must be submitted to the CPA Administration Office, 2nd Floor Arrival Building, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport. Failure to provide any of the required documents may result in automatic disqualification. Certain vacancies may require written and/or physical test. Selected applicants will be subjected to pre-employment drug screening. CPA reserves the right to waive or implement other qualifications to meet its needs. The deadline for submission of applications and required documents is no later than **4:30 p.m., Friday, January 3, 2014.**

Detailed information on qualifications and position description for the above positions shall be picked up along with the application form during regular working hours at the CPA's Administration Office (2nd Floor) of the Saipan International Airport, Arrival Wing. For more information, please contact the CPA Human Resources by email at rita.omar@cpa.gov.mp or by phone at (670) 237-6500.

CPA is an Equal Opportunity Employer and CPA hires those who are legally entitled to employment in the CNMI.

/s/ MaryAnn Q. Lizama
Executive Director

Saipan Shrimp & Broodstock Co., Ltd. is inviting qualified individuals to apply for the following position:

Operations Manager
Job duties: The operations manager is responsible in planning and implementation of the overall business direction of the company. Responsible for creating production and marketing plans and making sure these plans are implemented and targets are achieved accordingly.

Job requirements: Minimum 5 years experience in managing shrimp aquaculture business. Must have the technical knowledge on shrimp farming as well as the skills necessary in business management. Must be a graduate of a 4-year degree course related to aquaculture or business management and have proven track record of managing businesses and people. The position also requires being on call 24 hours, 7 days a week. Basic knowledge of electrical, plumbing and mechanical systems also required.

Electrician
Job duties: Pull out, installation, repair and maintenance of water pumps, motor aerators, and other support equipment for aquaculture. Repair and maintenance of electrical installations, building, and other structures. Repair and maintenance of heavy duty generators.

Job requirements: Minimum 4 years experience in electrical and mechanical works. Related engineering degree and previous experience in aquaculture operations is an advantage and preferred. Willing to be on call 24 hours a day. Able to lift up to 75lbs.

Accountant
Job duties: Prepare, examine or analyze accounting record, financial statements or other financial reports to assess accuracy, completeness and conformance to reporting and procedural standards. Report to management regarding the finances of establishments. Establish tables of accounts and design entries to proper accounts. Develop, implement, modify and document record keeping and accounting systems. Compute taxes owed and prepare tax returns ensuring compliance with payment, reporting and other tax requirements.

Job requirements: Accounting graduate or 4 years bachelor degree in accounting. Minimum 5 years experience in accounting. Well-versed in Peachtree accounting or any other accounting software. Must be skilled in use of MS Excel, Word and PowerPoint. Strong communication and interpersonal skills, team player and with positive attitude.

Aquaculture Farmer
Job duties: Feeding and monitoring of live aquatic animals, cleaning of tanks, weighing of feeds, harvesting and packing, nighttime monitoring, grounds maintenance and other related jobs.

Job requirements: High school graduate, in good physical and health condition, able to lift up to 60lbs., knowledge of basic mathematical calculations. Must be willing to work night shifts, be a team player and with good working attitude.

Sales Representative
Job duties: Market development, delivery, collection and other customer relations duty. Formulations of sales and marketing strategies. Market survey and analysis and competitor benchmarking.

Job requirements: Minimum experience of 4 years in the seafood retail and wholesale business. Professional driving skills required. Proficient in MS Word and Excel. With proven track record in sales specifically in market development. With excellent oral and written communication skills.

Applications can be obtained and submitted at the Saipan Shrimp & Broodstock Co., Ltd. Human Resources Office located on the 2nd Floor, JP Center Building at Beach Road, Garapan. Salaries will commensurate with qualifications and experience. To be considered, applications must be submitted no later than 5:00pm, Monday, January 06, 2014.

Saipan Shrimp & Broodstock Co., Ltd. is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Qualified women, minorities and disabled persons are encouraged to apply.

Twice-fired Terry Stotts finds success in Portland

By JON KRAWCZYNSKI
AP BASKETBALL WRITER



It was the summer of 2007, and Terry Stotts had just been fired for the second time in four years.

The George Karl disciple wasn't sure where his coaching career was headed, so he took a pilgrimage to Europe to visit with some of the top international coaches in the game. He wanted to see things from a fresh perspective and, in the back of his mind, he wondered if he might need to make the move overseas to continue being a head coach.

"I've always been open to the idea of coaching in Europe," Stotts recently told The Associated Press. "I enjoy the lifestyle of living in a foreign country. That was always in the back of my mind that might be a possibility."

Six years later, Stotts has finally found a roster, and a front office, in Portland that has blended perfectly with his wide-open offensive philosophy. He's making the most of what may have been his last chance to be an NBA head coach.

In his second season, the Trail Blazers have become one of the biggest surprises in the league. They are off to a 23-5 start, tied for the third-best start in franchise history.

They lead the league in 3-point shooting and are third in attempts, and Stotts offers no apologies for the approach. He's meshed that around a devastating pick-and-roll/pick-and-pop team of Damian Lillard and LaMarcus Aldridge to make the Blazers offense one of the most entertaining to watch in the league. They've topped 105 points 13 games in a row, the longest streak since Denver did it in 2008.

"We're playing the style of basketball that I envisioned as far as moving, being unselfish, versatility, shooting 3s," Stotts said. "That's what we envisioned."

General manager Neil Olshey has filled the cupboard with goodies for Stotts, and the coach enjoys a supportive owner in Paul Allen. Those two entities weren't necessarily there in his first two head coaching jobs in Atlanta and Milwaukee.

Stotts was fired after two seasons both times.

"I thought Terry Stotts, both in Atlanta and in Milwaukee, did a great job," ESPN analyst and former coach Jeff Van Gundy said. "He just didn't have winning NBA talent. Oftentimes, when you get your first jobs in this league, you don't have talented-enough teams that can consistently win."

Stotts was fired by the Bucks with 18 games to play in 2007, and that's when he spent three weeks visiting with Ettore Messina and CSKA Moscow, Zeljko Obradovic with Panathinaikos in Greece and David Blatt in Istanbul.

Stotts played in Europe and has always been intrigued by the international style of play. When Rick Carlisle brought Stotts on as an assistant with Dallas in 2008, he brought some of those ideas to the table and helped the Mavericks win the championship in 2011.

"He has a great overall feel for the game," Carlisle said. "He's the best offensive coach I've ever been around."

Stotts credits his time in Dallas for



Portland Trail Blazers coach Terry Stotts gestures from the bench during the second half of an NBA basketball game against the New Orleans Pelicans in Portland, Ore., Saturday, Dec. 21, 2013. Portland won 110-107.

helping crystalize his approach to being a coach.

"We played a style in Dallas that I really liked," Stotts said. "That really had as much of an impact on the coach that I am right now as compared to who I

was in Milwaukee and Atlanta."

When Olshey hired Stotts before last season, several Portland players and many league observers were surprised by the move. Some pushed for interim head coach Kaleb Canales to get the

job, but Stotts quickly won them over with a measured approach and player-friendly offensive system.

"You're at your best when you're not worried about what someone's saying about your offensive game,"

guard Wesley Matthews said. "There are structures and guidelines, but he trusts us enough to make the right plays out there."

Lillard's presence in crunch time has brought a new swagger to the group. The additions of Robin Lopez, Dorell Wright and Thomas Robinson have added depth and Aldridge is enjoying the best season of what has been a standout, if overlooked, career to this point.

"He's been instrumental," Aldridge said of Stotts. "He came in and he changed the whole system. He's instilled confidence in every player. He has us buying into playing defense this year and playing unselfish, and a lot of teams don't play as unselfish as we are."

And now, after two false starts to begin his head coaching career, Stotts has the feeling that he's finally found a home.

"It's definitely been special," Stotts said. "You just feel like there's no question it's going in the right direction."

Carlisle is one of the few who doesn't seem surprised that it happened this quickly.

"Back in August of '12, there weren't a lot of people clamoring to get the Portland Trail Blazers job," Carlisle said. "In this league, you're not just going to inherit a great job. You've got to take a tough situation and make it a good situation and that's exactly what he's done."

Heat rally past Hawks, 121-119 in OT

MIAMI (AP)—LeBron James scored 38 points, Michael Beasley made two free throws with 9.2 seconds left to put Miami up for good, and the Heat beat the Atlanta Hawks 121-119 in overtime on Monday night.

The Heat wasted an early 13-0 lead, then rallied from seven points down in the final 90 seconds of the fourth quarter. Ray Allen made three free throws with 8 seconds left in regulation to send it to overtime, after getting fouled by Atlanta's DeMarre Carroll.

Allen finished with 19 points, Mario Chalmers and Chris Andersen each scored 12 and Chris Bosh finished with 11 for the Heat, who played without Dwyane Wade and still beat the Hawks for the ninth straight time.

Jeff Teague scored 26 points, Paul Millsap made seven 3-pointers on the way to a 25-point night, and Al Horford finished with 21 points and 11 rebounds for Atlanta.

Kyle Korver scored 15 for the Hawks, who had a chance to win it at the end of overtime, but never got a good look. Chalmers used Miami's foul to give with 2.3 seconds left, sending Atlanta back to the huddle where it used its last time out to draw a play.

Pelicans 113, Kings 87

In Sacramento, Calif., Tyreke Evans made a memorable return, scoring a season-high 25 points and adding 12 assists to help New Orleans snap a four-game losing streak.

The Pelicans pulled away in the fourth quarter, outscoring the Kings 36-23 to salvage their only victory on a five-game road trip. Evans was a major factor in the second half, scoring 13 points.

DeMarcus Cousins had 24 points and 14 rebounds for the Kings, who committed 22 turnovers in losing for the sixth time in eight games. Isaiah Thomas had 21 points and Marcus Thornton had 19. Rudy Gay made 2-of-12 shots and scored 11 points.

Suns 117, Lakers 90

In Phoenix, Gerald Green hit six 3-pointers and scored 22 points and Miles Plumlee grabbed a career-high 20 rebounds.

Plumlee added 17 points while having his way inside with an ailing Pao Gasol in the Suns' third straight win.

Marcus Morris added 19 points on 5-of-6 shooting from 3-point range for Phoenix, which held a 62-39 edge on the boards in their eighth win in nine games.

Nick Young scored 19 points and Jodie Meeks 18 for the undermanned Lakers, who fell to 1-2 since Kobe Bryant was sidelined with a knee injury.

Warriors 89, Nuggets 81

In Denver, David Lee had 28 points and 10 rebounds for his ninth straight double-double.

Stephen Curry, battling foul trouble much of the night, added 14 points in the first meeting between the teams since the Warriors, as the sixth seed, ousted third-seeded Denver 4-2 in the first round of the playoffs last spring.

Klay Thompson scored eight of his 13 points in the fourth quarter, helping Golden State overcome a fourth-quarter deficit for the fourth time this season and sending the Nuggets to their season-high fourth consecutive loss.

Mavericks 111, Rockets 104

In Houston, Dirk Nowitzki scored 31 points, including 10 in the fourth quarter for Dallas.

Houston cut the lead to six after a 3-pointer by Aaron Brooks with about 3 1/2 minutes left, but Nowitzki knocked down consecutive baskets to push the Mavericks lead to 107-97.

Dwight Howard had 29 points and 15 rebounds for the Rockets, who were playing their second straight game without leading scorer James Harden, who was out with a sprained left ankle.

Pacers 103, Nets 86

In New York, Lance Stephenson scored a career-high 26 points in his hometown, Paul George also had 26, and the Indiana Pacers went on to their third straight easy victory.

Stephenson, who recorded his NBA-leading third triple-double of the season Sunday in a rout of Boston, did most of his damage as a scorer, back where he did plenty of it in high school. He became the career scoring leader in New York state, scoring nearly 3,000 points at Abraham Lincoln High School.

Bobcats 111, Bucks 110, OT

In Charlotte, N.C., Al Jefferson had a season-high 26 points, and Kemba Walker nearly had a triple double as the Bobcats won for the fourth time in five games.

Jefferson was 12 of 23 from the field as the Bobcats (14-15) overcame an 18-point first half deficit.

Walker had 25 points, 10 assists and nine rebounds, and Anthony Tolliver had 12 points on four 3-pointers.

Rookie Cody Zeller added a career-high 12 points.

It's the third time in the last four games the Bobcats have come back from at least 16 points down to win.

Knicks 103, Magic 98

In Orlando, Fla., Carmelo Anthony had 19 points before leaving the game with a sprained left ankle in the third quarter.

New York led by 25 points before having its lead cut all the way to a point in the fourth quarter. Beno Udrih hit six straight free-throws in the final 26 seconds to help preserve the win.

J.R. Smith added 18 points and 10 rebounds.

Pistons 115, Cavaliers 92

In Cleveland, Josh Smith scored 25 points, Brandon Jennings added 21 and Detroit won for the seventh time in eight road games.

Jennings also had 13 assists for Detroit, which went ahead for good midway through the first quarter and built a 21-point lead late in the first half. The margin reached 28 points in the fourth quarter as the Pistons rolled to their biggest win of the season.

Kyrie Irving scored 21 points for Cleveland, which last lost four of five.

Spurs 112, Raptors 99

In San Antonio, Tony Parker had 26 points and eight assists for San Antonio.

Manu Ginobili had 18 points and Danny Green was 4 for 6 on 3-pointers in scoring 14 points for San Antonio (21-7). Kawhi Leonard added 13 points and 10 rebounds after missing Saturday's game due to a dental procedure.

Kyle Lowry and Terrence Ross had 23 points each and DeMar DeRozan added 13 points for Toronto (11-15).

Packers hoping to make quick call on QB Rodgers



GREEN BAY, Wis. (AP)—When the Green Bay Packers take the field for practice on Thursday, they will know whether quarterback Aaron Rodgers is going to start Sunday's NFC North showdown at the Chicago Bears.

There was no word Tuesday on the most scrutinized collarbone in Wisconsin. The team is hoping to make a call early this week.

"We've done a scan and we're going through the process of evaluation," Rodgers said on his weekly ESPN radio show. "Probably not what everybody wants to hear, but I can say definitively (on) Thursday—one way or another—it will be a definitive conclusion to this week's unknown. We wanted to give everybody a rest for Christmas, be able to enjoy their Christmas."

Rodgers broke his left collarbone Nov. 4 against the Bears and has missed the last seven games. He started practicing on a limited basis four weeks ago and has been pain-free for about two weeks. He had hoped to get medical clearance for each of the past two games.

The Packers are 2-5-1 since Rodgers' injury, which occurred on the opening series of their 27-20 loss to the Bears. If Rodgers is unable to go, Matt Flynn would start his fifth straight game.

The winner of Sunday's game at Soldier Field gets the division title.

Since relieving Scott Tolzien and rallying Green Bay to a 26-26 tie against Minnesota on Nov. 24, Flynn has led the Packers to four fourth-quarter comebacks, including last Sunday's loss to Pittsburgh. The Packers are 2-2 with Flynn as the starter, although the players are clearly hopeful of Rodgers' return.

"Gut feeling? That Christmas is tomorrow," veteran wide receiver James Jones said. "I don't know. I think we will get some good news."

Rodgers wouldn't reveal the results of his scan but certainly seemed upbeat during the 45-minute show.

"I'm feeling better and not thinking about my injury at all," Rodgers said. "I think ultimately it comes down to, it's big on the medical side. Is the bone healed or is there a large risk of going back out there that's too great, that the organization would not want to put me out there?"

"Obviously I want to be out there. I know what's at stake. This is an important week for us. We're somehow back in this position to be able to get into the playoffs. What a better way to do that than against the Chicago Bears?"

Coach Mike McCarthy said Monday that the team wanted to make a



In this Nov. 24, 2013 file photo, Green Bay Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers stretches his arm during warm ups prior to an NFL football game against the Minnesota Vikings in Green Bay, Wis. AP

NFL defenses trying to redo tackling technique

By **DAVE CAMPBELL**
AP PRO FOOTBALL WRITER

In the seventh season of Dashon Goldson's NFL career, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers have been trying to teach an old safety a new trick: how to tackle effectively without breaking a rule or, worse, damaging a body part.

Goldson recently served a one-game suspension for a helmet-to-helmet hit. He was fined a total of \$130,000 earlier this year for two other illegal head shots the league has been trying to shut down for the sake of better preserving the health of the players.

"We're trying to re-program his strike zone so we don't keep getting those penalties," Buccaneers coach Greg Schiano said earlier this month. "And I know he is trying very hard to do it as well. He's getting better at it, which is encouraging."

Goldson has long been known as a hard hitter. Now, fair or not, the perception of his style has taken a darker turn: a player prone to making cheap shots.

"I remember being on the good side of it, hearing commentators, analysts talking about how perfect, how good, how I do it the right way, and all of a sudden with the new rule I'm a dirty player, a nasty player, targeted, and

I'm not playing the game how it's supposed to be played," Goldson said. "I think that's ridiculous."

His case is a snap shot of the conundrum defensive players already trying to keep up with record-setting passing attacks have discovered in the current NFL. Concussions are a serious problem, but are torn knee ligaments really an acceptable alternative? Hitting high and going low can both prompt their own sets of penalties.

"What will happen, like everything else in life, is everyone will adapt or they won't survive," Schiano said. "So, that's what we're in the process of doing."

Thus, there's an entire generation of safeties, cornerbacks and linebackers accustomed to using whatever method necessary to take down a fleet-footed ball carrier, trying to retrain their brains to focus on the midsection.

"It's all about teaching proper technique," Jets defensive coordinator Dennis Thurman said. "When guys tackle properly, they don't get fined. If you're looking to just get the blowup hit ... you'll probably get that envelope from the commissioner."

One week after Goldson's suspension, Tennessee safety Michael Griffin got a one-game ban as a fellow repeat offender of the no-high-

hits-to-defenseless-players rule. That was Griffin's fourth violation in three seasons. Griffin started low on the play that got him suspended, but he wound up popping the opponent's helmet off as the other player was in the process of falling.

"For a player, yeah, I think it's hard because he came into the league when safeties played a different way and the game was different that way in the back end," Titans coach Mike Munchak said. "Now, he's had to learn, as all safeties have had to, to change his game and the way that he plays. He's done that. But it's a fine line."

Defensive backs are asked to break up passes over the middle and make wide receivers think twice about exposing their bodies to catch them. Playing in the secondary isn't simply about being in position to prevent the offense from moving the ball through the air. They have to use aggressive tactics.

Then there's the sport's culture of contact, with jarring hits celebrated by cheering crowds and captured on video in various highlight packages. Reprogramming that is probably impossible.

The dilemma boils down to this: Wide receivers and running backs are usually too fast to be consistently

decision on Rodgers' status early in the week and let his teammates know the plan. Until now, the Packers have not announced their decision on Rodgers' status each week until Friday, when he has been ruled out.

"I think No. 1 for the football team and also Aaron Rodgers, I think it's important for us to make a quicker decision," McCarthy said. "This has obviously been frustrating and stressful for Aaron, rightfully so, but also our football (team). I want them to know who the quarterback's going to be."

Rodgers has thrown for 2,218 yards and 15 touchdowns in eight games. The 2011 NFL MVP has completed 66.9 percent of his passes with only four interceptions.

"I thought as of last week there'd be a lot more healing that would have gone on," Rodgers said. "Learned a lot about the clavicle and the kind of blood flow or lack of that it gets as being a reason it didn't look as good as we all wanted it last week."

taken down with a head-up, arms-wrapped-around-the-chest form tackle players are taught when they first put on the pads.

"It's bang-bang, within milliseconds, trying to make a decision," San Diego Chargers safety Eric Weddle said. "You're just going to go off instincts."

Pick your poison. Players trying to stay in the league as long as they can will often choose the present over their future health.

"I'd rather get hit up high and be dizzy for a play than get hit low and be out for a whole season," Goldson said.

New England Patriots tight end Rob Gronkowski, who tore his anterior cruciate ligament on a direct hit to the knee three weeks ago, was the latest star who went down from a low hit. Evidence of an increase in lower-body injuries from the recent concussion crackdown is inconclusive. But in this fast-paced, physically punishing sport, there may not be a perfect solution.

"Guys are trying to adjust the best they can," Minnesota Vikings defensive end Jared Allen said. "You try to figure out what you can do legally, but at the end of the day guys don't think about it. You're just trying to get the guy on the ground and deal with the consequences after."

Jerry Jones: Romo could be cleared to face Eagles

IRVING, Texas (AP)—Dallas owner Jerry Jones says the Cowboys aren't ruling Tony Romo out of a winner-take-all game against Philadelphia because doctors could clear him after treating his back injury.

Jones said on his radio show Tuesday that his quarterback has proven he can play with pain but won't if doctors advise against it.

The Cowboys (8-7) and Eagles (9-6) are playing Sunday night in Dallas' third straight season finale against an NFC East rival with the division title and a playoff berth on the line.

Romo was the starter in losses to the

New York Giants two years ago and Redskins last season. He injured his back in the fourth quarter of Sunday's 24-23 win at Washington.

Kyle Orton, who hasn't started a game since 2011, is the backup. The team website had a report on Tuesday night that Jon Kitna is coming out of retirement to join the Cowboys as the third quarterback.

The move is pending a physical for the 41-year-old Kitna, who retired after the 2011 season.

Jones said he had lengthy discussions with Romo and his doctors Monday about getting the 33-year-old ready

to play. The owner wouldn't discuss the details of Romo's injury.

"If you know Tony, you can't imagine what a competitor he is, and he doesn't want to miss a snap," Jones said. "He was very disappointed, particularly disappointed for his team, repeated over and over again, 'Jerry, I can't tell you how badly I feel relative to you and relative to my teammates.'"

Romo didn't miss a game in 2011 after breaking his ribs in Week 2 against San Francisco. He was heavily padded and medicated the next week against Washington and did enough to get the Cowboys an 18-16 win.

"Tony will play with all the pain," Jones said. "But his doctor has to clear him."

If Romo isn't cleared, Orton will make his first start since the 2011 season finale for Kansas City against Denver, the team that waived him earlier that year after making Tim Tebow the starter.

Orton signed a three-year, \$10.5 million contract with the Cowboys that offseason—an investment that Jones says was for just the scenario facing Dallas now.

"The main thing is that it's not like Kyle Orton just gets here this morning

or gets here tomorrow morning," Jones said. "Kyle Orton has been here and he knows this system frankly as well as Romo does. And has practiced it. He just doesn't have the game time that he would have had as the starter, and he doesn't get the reps."

Romo and Orton are currently the only quarterbacks on the roster after Alex Tanney was claimed off the practice squad by Cleveland last month.

"If you don't realize that you're going to be dealing with injury information, sudden change in plans, then you're in the wrong area," Jones said. "We're in as good a shape under these circumstances as you could possibly be in. We have planned on this very event."

Tanaka’s team says he can seek career in MLB

TOKYO (AP)—Pitcher Masahiro Tanaka is set to move to the majors next season after his Japanese team Rakuten Eagles announced Wednesday it was prepared to let him leave, reversing its earlier rejection.

Rakuten Eagles president Yozo Tachibana told a news conference that the team has decided to release him through the posting system, paving the way for his departure. Tachibana said Tanaka’s outstanding performance over the past seven years, including this season, meant he deserved to be allowed to move to the U.S.

Tanaka, a 25-year-old right-hander, went 24-0 with a 1.27 ERA with the Eagles during the regular season and sought a move to the majors. But he has two years remaining on his contract and Rakuten was under no obligation to release him.

“I’m grateful to the team for allowing me to try. Now I’ve made a first step,” he said. “I hope I would receive offers from as many teams as possible so I have a wider option.”

The New York Yankees are considered the leading candidates to sign Tanaka, though the capping of the posting fee at \$20 million meant many other teams could also afford to make offers.

The Eagles had rejected the new posting system but it was passed by a vote of Japan’s professional teams. Following that decision, Rakuten had initially said they want to retain Tanaka, before Wednesday’s change of heart. Tachibana said the team took into



Rakuten Golden Eagles President Yozo Tachibana speaks at a press conference after a meeting with his team ace Masahiro Tanaka, in Sendai, northern Japan Wednesday, Dec. 25 2013. Tachibana told a news conference Wednesday that it has decided to let Tanaka seek his career in Major League baseball next season, reversing its earlier rejection.

consideration Tanaka’s “outstanding contribution to the team” since he joined the Eagles seven years ago. Tanaka’s perfect 24-0 record set a new mark in the history of Japanese professional baseball and brought a first league championship to the team based in Sendai, which is still recovering from the devastation wrought by the 2011 earthquake and tsunami.

For 30 days from the time a player is posted, any MLB team can attempt to sign the player. It pays the posting fee only if it signs the player. Under the new rules, a Japanese club may make players available between Nov. 1 and Feb. 1. A player who is not signed may not be posted again until the following Nov. 1.

Tachibana, the Rakuten president, said his team is happy to retain Tanaka if he does not reach an agreement with an MLB team.

The new posting system was negotiated after some MLB teams objected that only the richest clubs could afford to bid on top Japanese players.

Under the previous agreement, which began in 1998 and ran through last offseason, there was no cap on bidding and only the highest bidder could negotiate with the player.

Boston obtained pitcher Daisuke Matsuzaka from the Seibu Lions before the 2007 season for \$51,111,111.11, and agreed to a \$52 million, six-year contract. Texas got pitcher Yu Darvish from the Hokkaido Nippon Ham Fighters before the 2012 season for \$51,703,411 and gave him a \$56 million, six-year deal.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS				
EASTERN CONFERENCE				
Atlantic Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Toronto	11	15	.423	—
Boston	12	17	.414	½
New York	9	18	.333	2½
Brooklyn	9	18	.333	2½
Philadelphia	8	20	.286	4
Southeast Division				
Miami	21	6	.778	—
Atlanta	15	13	.536	6½
Charlotte	14	15	.483	8
Washington	12	13	.480	8
Orlando	8	20	.286	13½
Central Division				
Indiana	23	5	.821	—
Detroit	14	16	.467	10
Chicago	10	16	.385	12
Cleveland	10	17	.370	12½
Milwaukee	6	22	.214	17
WESTERN CONFERENCE				
Southwest Division				
San Antonio	22	6	.786	—
Houston	18	11	.621	4½
Dallas	16	12	.571	6
New Orleans	12	14	.462	9
Memphis	12	15	.444	9½
Northwest Division				
Portland	23	5	.821	—
Oklahoma City	22	5	.815	½
Denver	14	13	.519	8½
Minnesota	13	15	.464	10
Utah	8	23	.258	16½
Pacific Division				
L.A. Clippers	20	9	.690	—
Phoenix	17	10	.630	2
Golden State	16	13	.552	4
L.A. Lakers	13	15	.464	6½
Sacramento	8	19	.296	11

NBA LEADERS					
SCORING					
	G	FG	FT	PTS	AVG
Durant, OKC	26	236	216	735	28.3
Anthony, NYK	26	244	165	690	26.5
Love, MIN	26	216	158	655	25.2
James, MIA	26	236	145	648	24.9
Curry, GOL	25	210	102	607	24.3
Harden, HOU	23	168	168	549	23.9
George, IND	26	209	134	620	23.8
Aldridge, POR	28	268	111	647	23.1
Cousins, SAC	25	207	148	562	22.5
Affalo, ORL	26	197	115	566	21.8
Lillard, POR	28	188	140	603	21.5
Irving, CLE	26	204	108	559	21.5
DeRozan, TOR	24	185	118	516	21.5
Westbrook, OKC	23	177	106	492	21.4
Nowitzki, DAL	26	201	108	549	21.1
Ellis, DAL	27	205	128	558	20.7
Griffin, LAC	28	219	131	574	20.5
Martin, MIN	25	161	135	509	20.4
Thompson, GOL	28	202	61	552	19.7
Wall, WAS	25	177	106	490	19.6

FG PERCENTAGE			
	FG	FGA	PCT
Jordan, LAC	109	168	.649
Drummond, DET	172	278	.619
Johnson, TOR	122	201	.607
James, MIA	236	393	.601
Hill, LAL	104	176	.591
Howard, HOU	181	308	.588
Lopez, Bro	129	229	.563
Horford, ATL	219	390	.562
Diaw, SAN	111	204	.544
Wade, MIA	157	290	.541

REBOUNDS				
	G	OFF	DEF	TOT
Love, MIN	26	100	255	355
Howard, HOU	28	100	270	370
Jordan, LAC	28	112	251	363
Drummond, DET	29	152	212	364
Aldridge, POR	28	69	240	309
Cousins, SAC	25	70	198	268
Bogut, GOL	27	73	213	286
Griffin, LAC	28	65	230	295
Thompson, CLE	26	98	161	259
Lee, GOL	28	81	197	278

ASSISTS		
	G	AST
Paul, LAC	27	304
Curry, GOL	25	231
Wall, WAS	25	228
Holiday, NOR	25	201
Teague, ATL	27	217
Jennings, DET	27	215
Lawson, DEN	24	190
Rubio, MIN	27	213
Blake, LAL	21	162
Westbrook, OKC	23	159

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WRECKING

From Page 28

Ahead by only 3, Wrecking Balls started pulling away midway in the second half with its balance offense.

Meanwhile, the Sun Palace Christmas caging kicked off last Saturday with two games in the boys division and one in the girls category.

In the first match, Rollers 2 nosed out Rollers 1, 63-61.

Kobe Mendoza top-scored for Rollers 2 with 16 points and also hit the crucial and last field goal of the squad, while Jun Fidelino had the insurance free throw and drilled three of the team’s last 5 points.

The Rollers 1 and 2 tiff was a neck-

and-neck battle as Mendoza and Mike Espinosa traded baskets with Mike Arciaga and Irvin Malonzo. Only a point also separated the teams in the first half with Rollers 1 ahead, 29-28. Sam Darag scored all his 5 markers in the closing seconds of the first half to give Rollers 2 the shaky lead.

In the second half, it was Mendoza’s turn to take on the cudgels for Rollers 2, as he logged 12 points after converting only one field goal in the opening half.

In the other boys division game, Rollers 3 topped FTMP (Funky Town Monkey Pimps), 71-64.

C.J. Morales lifted Rollers 3 to the 7-point win after sizzling for 22 points. He made most of his points in the second half, which started with Rollers 3

up by only a hair, 34-23. Six players hit at least two field goals for Rollers 3 in the first half to earn a double-digit lead before FTMP tried to mount a comeback in the second half. However, Rollers 3 managed to keep its distance against FTMP, thanks to the 16 second-half points of Morales.

Tristan Montes led FTMP’s losing cause, firing a game-high 26 markers.

BOYS DIVISION

First Game

Rollers 2 63 – Mendoza 16, Espinosa 14, Fidelino 11, Capuyon 10, Darag 5, Babauta 2, Vivero 2.

Rollers 1 62 – Arciaga 12, Malonzo 11, Ano 10, Cayading 9, Factor 5, Yang

4, Yu 4, Pangelinan 2, Iglecias 2.

Scoring by halves: 29-28, 63-62.

Second Game

Rollers 3 71 – Morales 22, Cruz 11, Francisco 9, K. De Luna 6, Dancoe 6, A. De Luna 6, Factor 5, Alipio 2.

FTMP 64 – Montes 26, Lixing 13, Lampkin 12, Omengkar 6, Dantic 2, Ballesteros 1.

Scoring by halves: 34-23, 71-64.

GIRLS DIVISION

Wrecking Balls 47 – Abrams 13, Ito 11, Lebría 6, Williams 6, Alegre 2, Reyes 2.

Football 31 – Lopez 12, Castillo 8, Rastguiy 6, Lumabi 2, Lee 2.

Scoring by halves: 14-11, 47-31.

FOOT

From Page 28

the team’s goalkeeping chores in the second half.

Completing Foot Loose’s roster are Chad and Pinyarat Shankweiler, Dave Tanghal, Christian Castro, Jherico Tiamzon, and James Garcia.

Foot Loose handed Kanoa its second straight loss, as the latter suffered

a 0-10 defeat to Astig Futsal during the tournament’s opening day. Raffy Lee scored the lone goal for Kanoa in the first half of its game against Foot Loose, while Taka Borja made the other one in second half. Also playing for Kanoa are Christine and Joey Noble, Anthony Fruit, Theresa Toves, Wayne Lizama, Ian Maniago, Sebastian Manabat, Jonah Pohl, and Erika Santiago.

Meanwhile, in the other game,

Fake Madrid and Astig Futsal had a draw, 3-all.

James Ermitanio dropped two goals for Astig Futsal in the second half and Fake Madrid matched this after getting one goal apiece from Edwin Kim and Guinevere Borja. Diana Maniacop also hit the board to put Astig Futsal in the lead before Sunjoon Tenorio equalized for Fake Madrid.

With the draw, Fake Madrid and As-

tig Futsal are still tied for first place in the round-robin tournament with their similar 1-1-0 win-draw-loss record. Fake Madrid goes for the lead when it takes on the winless Kanoa Mighty today, while Astig Futsal faces Foot Loose to complete the first round of the tournament.

After two rounds, only the Top 2 teams in the standings will advance to the finals.

NMASA

From Page 28

fee is also only \$1.

Rogolifo said his staff are working on the full slate of programs for 2014 and will release it to the public once finalize.

The executive director added more improvements at the complex are on the way. NMASA will be replacing the metal door at the Ada Gym with a solid aluminum door soon, while floor tiles and windows will also be

replaced once funding is identified.

The association is also working on replacing bulbs at the track facility, gym, and the two ballfields. The grass at the infield of both ballfields will be removed and new ones will be planted.

“We are also working on seeking for funding through donations or federal grants to pay for proposed future projects such as building a concrete grandstand for both baseball and softball fields, repairing or replacing damages at the track and field surface, purchasing new sets of

scoreboards for these facilities and installing air-conditioning units in the gym,” Rogolifo said.

NMASA took over the management of the complex from the defunct Division of Sports and Recreation last October and is still waiting for the Senate approval of House Bill 18-111 to settle all legal issues on its claim to the facility. The bill, known as Northern Marianas Sports Act of 2013, was introduced by Rep. Tony Sablan (IR-Saipan) and approved by the House in October this year. It retained majority

of the provisions in the public law that created NMASA such as the group’s exclusive jurisdiction (directly or through constituent members or committees) on the CNMI’s participation to regional and international competitions. The bill also specifies NMASA’s authority on levying of fees for usage of facilities, awarding of vending and advertising rights, and operation of a public lottery provisions that are crucial in NMASA’s aim to function on its own and raise funds to support its operations and programs.

2nd DL Corp. Invitational Basketball League Finals

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO



Docomo Pacific's Juan Camacho pulls up for a shot against San Antonio's Bryle Alegre during their title game in the 2nd DL Corp. Invitational Basketball League last Saturday at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.



San Antonio's Randy Mungcal goes up for a fade-away jumper against Docomo's Juan Camacho.



San Antonio's Jun Del Rosario has nowhere to go after facing three Docomo defenders.



Docomo's Jimmy Tudela fakes off the defense of San Antonio's Nevin Salem.



Two Docomo players challenge the shot of San Antonio's Melvin Cadiang.



San Antonio's Nevin Salem drives against Docomo's Jimmy Tudela.



Docomo's Marlon Sison goes up for a layup against of San Antonio's Melvin Cadiang.



From left, Docomo's Rolly Paraiso, San Antonio's Bryle Alegre, and Docomo's Juan Camacho get ready for the rebound play.



Docomo's James Villacrusis pulls up for a short jumper against San Antonio's Bryle Alegre.



Docomo's Rolly Paraiso rams into the defense of San Antonio's Bryle Alegre.



**Packers hoping
to make
quick call on
QB Rodgers**
PAGE 25

Saipan Tribune Sports

**Twice-fired
Terry Stotts
finds success
in Portland**
PAGE 24



28 THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2013

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Wrecking Balls routs Futball

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Wrecking Balls won its debut in the 2013 Sun Palace Christmas Basketball Tournament after cruising past Futball, 47-31, last Tuesday at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.



Rachel Abrams led Wrecking Balls' 16-point victory, as she towered above the much smaller players of Futball and dominated the paint to finish with a game-high 13 points. While Abrams took care of business in the shaded lane, Kyla Ito hit some outside shots to earn double digits with her 11 markers. Completing the team are Kaylani Lebria and Lily Williams, who added 6 markers apiece, and Madeleine Alegre and Karlene Reyes, who chipped in 2 each. Shaina Santiago and Rikki Kautz are also in the Wrecking Balls' roster, but missed the team's first game.

Futball listed more players than Wrecking Balls, 11 to eight, but only Mikayla Lopez scored in twin digits with her 12. Lopez was credited for four of the five field goals Futball earned in the first half, helping her team remain afloat, as Wrecking Balls led by only 3 at the break, 14-11. Jeralyn Castillo nailed the other field goal (a triple) of Futball in the opening 20 minutes of play.

**See WRECKING on
Page 26**

Wrecking Balls' Rachel Abrams goes up for a shot against two Futball defenders during the first half of their game in the Sun Palace holiday caging last Tuesday at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.
ROSELYN B. MONROYO



Foot Loose recovers in holiday futsal tourney



By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



Foot Loose barged into the win column in the Saipan Soccer School's 2013 U13 Co-ed Christmas Futsal Tournament after whipping Kanoa Mighty Orange, 12-2, last Tuesday night at the TSL Sports Complex.

The victory allowed Foot Loose to

bounce back from a 1-6 beating at the hands of Fake Madrid during the opening of the tournament last Saturday.

Foot Loose opened a promising 5-1 lead in the first half of the 50-minute game and continued to dominate possession in the second half en route to the easy win. Bernadette Horey made a hat-trick in the first half to set up the lopsided victory, while Carla Ballesteros chipped in two before taking over

See FOOT on Page 26

A Foot Loose player, third from left, tries to keep possession during the second half of their game against Kanoa Mighty Orange in the SSS futsal tournament last Tuesday night at the TSL Sports Complex.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

A group of youth holds a practice run at the track facility of the Oleai Sports Complex last Tuesday afternoon.

NMASA to start programs next year

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association will have its programs in full swing next year after concentrating first on improving the Oleai Sports Complex during the past three months.

NMASA executive director Tony Rogolifo said some of the programs that the association will spearhead are the revivals of the youth and inter-government basketball leagues. He added that the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangilinan Ballfield will also be opened for men's and women's fast-pitch league, while NMASA is also planning on hosting an invitational basketball tournament that will bring Tinian and Rota teams to Saipan.

As for the other sports, NMASA will be coordinating with other federations that are having their regular competitions at the complex. One of them is the Saipan Little League, which will open its 2014 season in January. For basketball and volleyball players who do not have tournaments to compete in, they can still use the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium as afternoon hoops is allowed daily for a minimal fee of \$1 per play. Tuesday and Thursday evenings are for volleyball and the

See NMASA on Page 26